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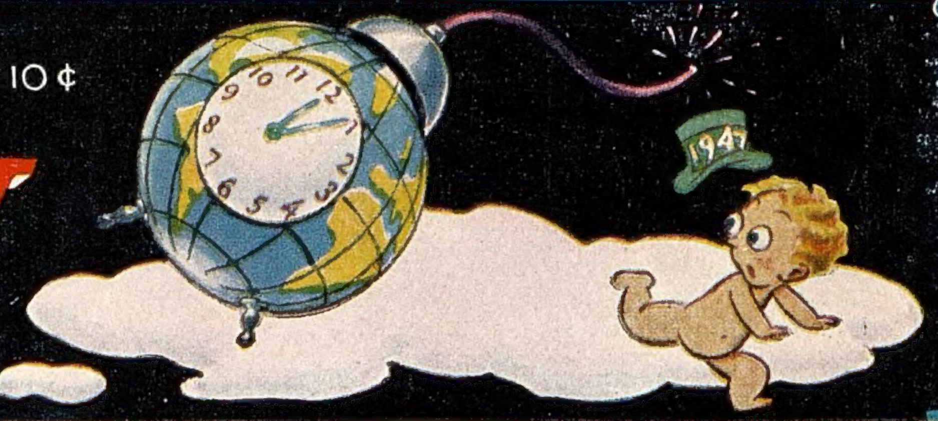

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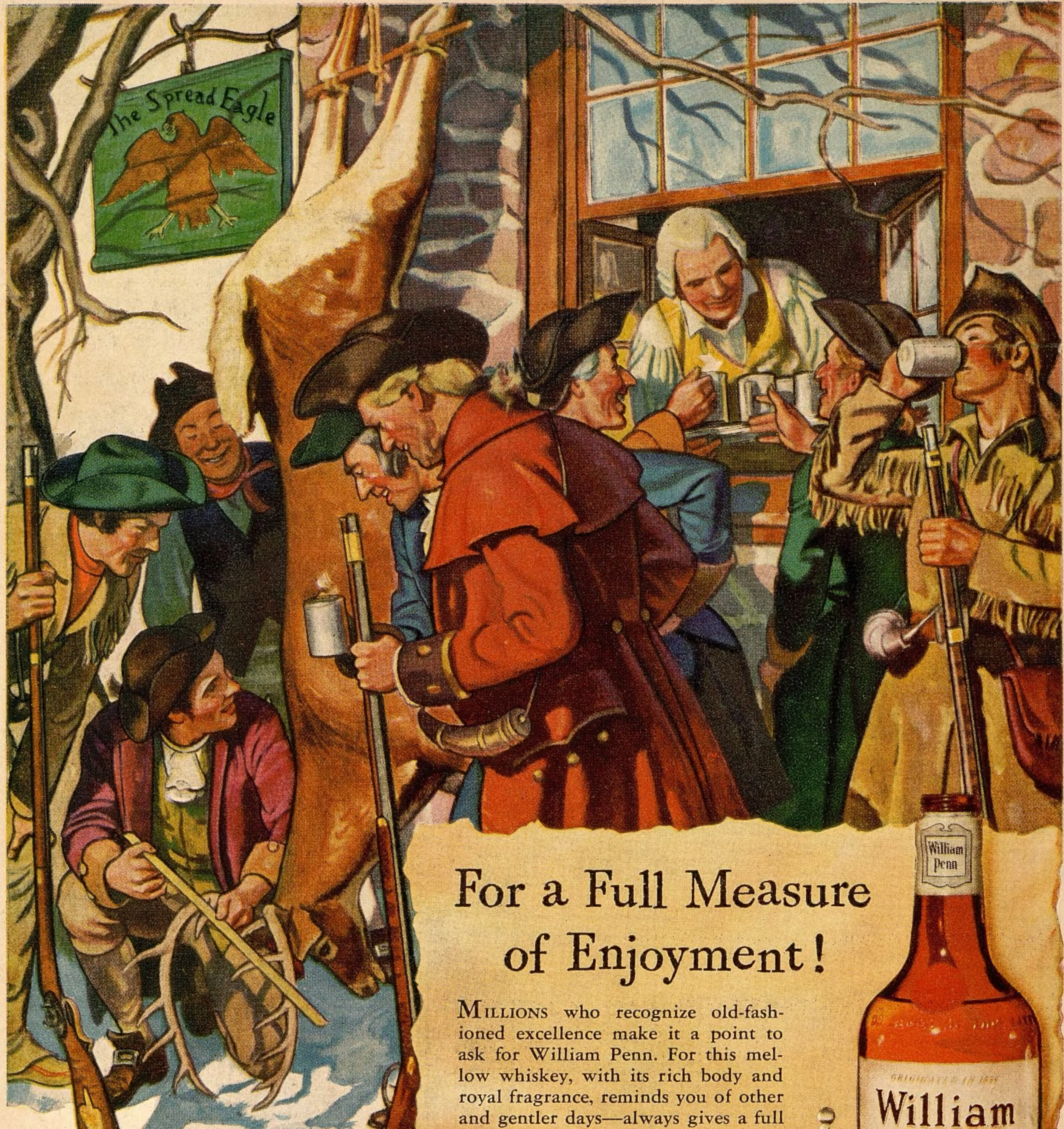
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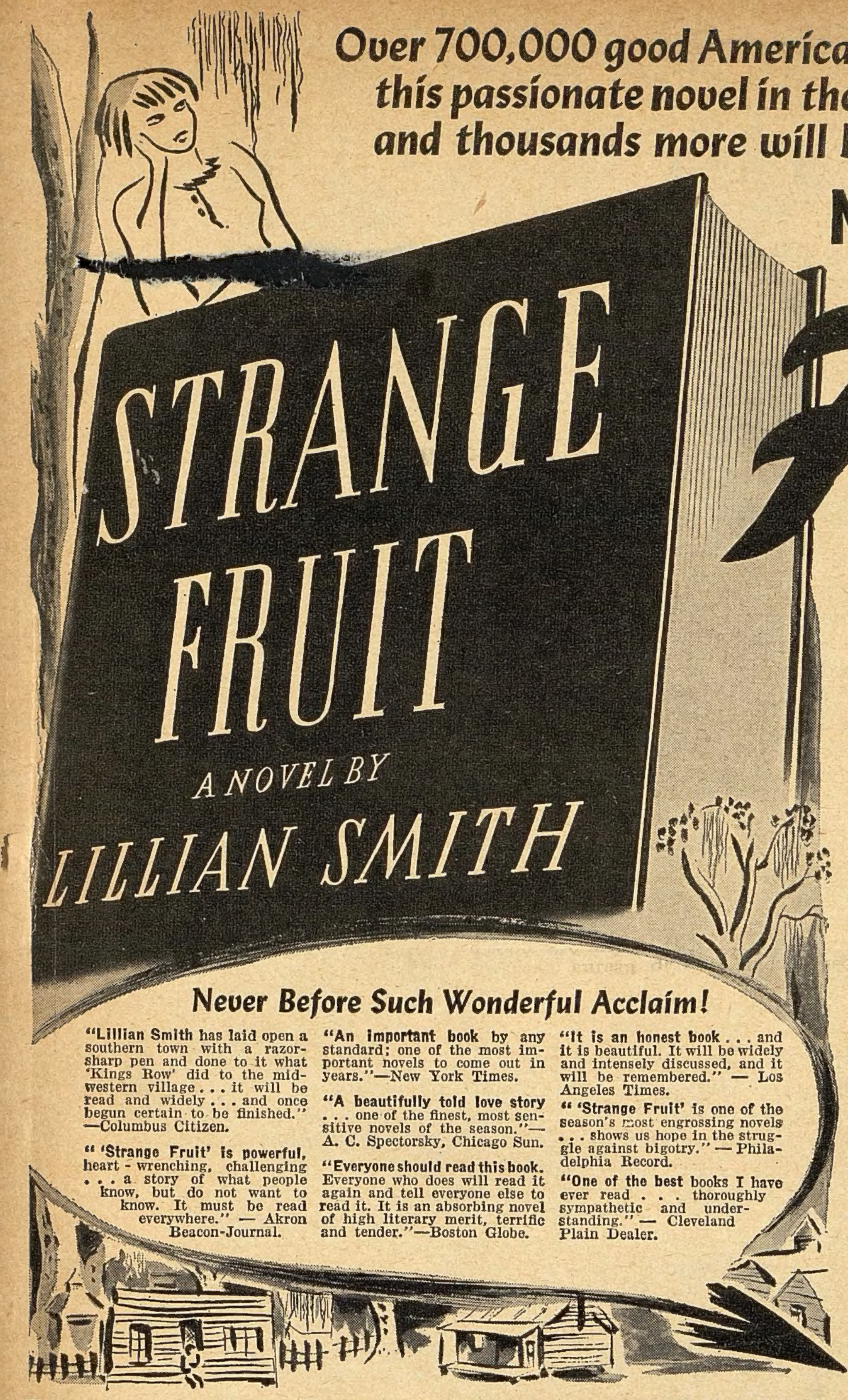

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Cover: Liberty's 1947 Calendar
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FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF THE

FUNK & WAGNALLS *New Standard* ENCYCLOPEDIA

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Volume One of the New 1947 Edition–Now On Press!

[ALL WE ASK YOU TO PAY IS TEN CENTS TO COVER COST OF MAILING IT TO YOU]

WE ARE now on press with our Winter 1947 Edition of the Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Encyclopedia, which in previous editions sold over 15,000,000 volumes—an amazing record.

This latest edition, newly revised, we have allocated among the newspapers and magazines carrying our Winter advertising program. In accordance with this plan, we have set aside 1,500 sets for readers of this magazine and now invite you to become the owner of a set—making you this extraordinary offer to enable you to become acquainted with the volumes before you decide to buy.

We want to send you Volume I of the set with our compliments. Merely send us 10¢ to cover our mailing cost—more as evidence of your good faith than anything else. This volume is yours to keep without any further obligation on your part. If, after examining Volume I, you want the rest of the 27-volume set, you may receive it at a ridiculously low price through our book-a-week plan, explained later in this announcement. Or, if you want no further books, you merely drop us a postcard saying so, and that ends the matter.

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EQUALITY

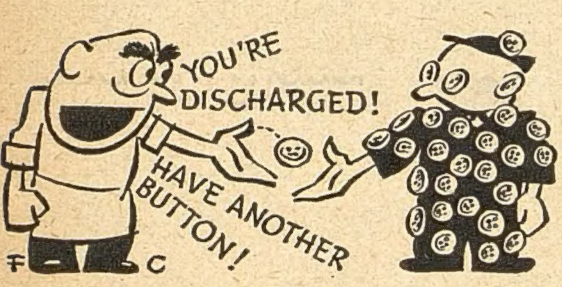
Franklin, Pa.—I liked Ruth McCoy Harris' article, Negro Doctor Down South (August 17) and it seems to me that the view taken by H. E. McDermott in the October 5 Vox Pop coincides with that of the Ku Klux Klan. Such people are the real breeders of racial hatred.

The Southern people are to be complimented on having a Negro doctor. It shows that sometimes they give an equal chance to everyone. —*D. Hahn.*

GET GLASSES

Quantico, Va.—B. Trione (Vox Pop, October 26) criticized Colonel Bond for stating that "there is no such thing as a 'discharge button' (honorable or otherwise)."

I agree, but if my friend Trione will be kind enough to sport a pair of glasses, he will note that the civilian-marine does not wear a U. S. Naval Reserve button. Instead he wears proudly a button issued by the U. S. Marine Corps which reads, "U. S. Marine Corps, Honorable Discharge."—*R. C. F. Miller, U.S.M.C.*


YOU'RE DISCHARGED!
HAVE ANOTHER BUTTON!

GRATEFUL AUTHOR

Bronxville, N. Y.—Just a line from a grateful author to thank you for doing such a nice job of condensing my book, Grandfather Objects (November 23).

It depresses me a little to think that I spent so much time making the tale book length when it could have been done in so much less space. Compliments to Win Hoskins on the drawings. He really got the spirit of the thing.—*Walter Wilder.*

REPEAT PERFORMANCE?

North Olmsted, Ohio—Gunther Stein, who wrote Will It Be Boom and Bust Again? (November 16), should bear in mind that the type of administrators who permitted the existence of the conditions which evolved into "Boom and Bust," are again in power, and they are apt to wipe the preventive laws and regulations, on which he places reliance, off the books altogether.—*Chas. T. James.*

OLD-FASHIONED GAL

Hartford, Conn.—In Charles Bonner's short story, Swords of Grass (November 16), the heroine stated that sixty-eight per cent of the young women of today are promiscuous. She should have said ninety-eight per cent. And even at that I have yet to meet a member of the lone two per cent—a girl who is willing to go through the old pattern of courtship, engagement, and marriage without an affair first.—*Gerald Okrant.*

POWER OF SUGGESTION

Washington, D. C.—The article Abracadabra—Good-by, Warts! by David Partridge and William Cole (November 9), recalls a true experience I had as a child when living in a small town in Nebraska.

There were seven warts on the little finger of my right hand.

One day, while I was in a drugstore, the druggist noticed them and said he could take them off. He mumbled some unfamiliar words and put a little saliva on them.

"HOCUS-POCUS! IMPERATUS! SIC SEMPER McGINNIS! PRESTO-CHANGE-O! BUTTERMILK AND BONES, AND THE CAT BIT OFF THE PUMPHANDLE!"

I forgot all about this until a few months later, when, to my great surprise, I discovered there were no warts.

This certainly proves there is power in suggestion.—*Mrs. Gertrude D. Rector.*

SHADES OF KIPLING

Springfield, Ohio—Thank you for that superfine short story, Payday, by Emmanuel Winters (November 9). It reminds me of Kipling at his best, together with a penetrating vividness and truth of its very own.

Van Swearingen's illustration is, I think, the most outstanding one I have seen in its poignant, truthful delineation of the miners.—*L. Johnson.*

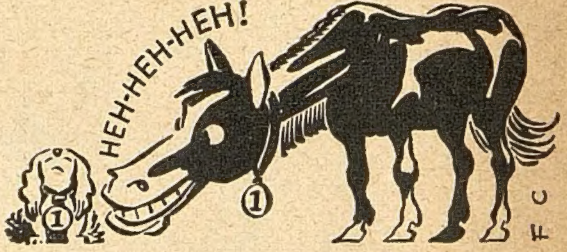
ON HER TOES

Newburgh, N. Y.—I am not trying to be funny, but I am curious to know why O. F. Schmidt, the artist who painted your ballet cover (November 9), did not have the small girl up on her toes, the way the teacher is.—*F. W. Dodd.*

This little girl was a novice, and standing on your toes takes practice. Try it and see.—Vox Pop Editor.

PURE-BRED

Walkerville, Mont.—Harmon and Elsie Tupper can't know very much about dogs if they call a dog a thoroughbred in their article, Beware of the Dog Gyps! (November 16). There is only one animal that can be called a thoroughbred, and that's a horse. A dog should be referred to as a pure-bred.—*Danny Lou Daniels.*



COCKEYED REQUIREMENTS

Mamaroneck, N. Y.—Thought you might enjoy a poem I wrote to my son who works in plastics and who is also a commercial artist. He said to me yesterday: "I don't see how you ever solve Ted Shane's Cockeyed Crossword puzzles. I can't get to first base with them."

You've got to be clever,
You've got to be smart.
You've got to know something
'Sides plastics and art.
You've got to be witty,
You've got to be nuts,
You've got to have patience
And courage and guts.
If you don't belong to
This branch of society,
You'd better not tackle
The Cockeyed variety.
—*Mrs. M. A. Harrower.*

COSMIC BOMB?

Santa Rosa, N. M.—We have been called Atomic Blackmailers publicly in Russia and the speech was loudly cheered. We pass over this fact with slight comment and go to the funnies. Let's be honest with ourselves. Are we blackmailing the rest of the world with the atom? The fact that the speech was cheered in Russia proves that part of the world, at least, thinks so. The Bikini tests, the White Sands proving grounds, the special Air

Force training camps we maintain, the announcement that our new bomber, the B-36, can drop an atomic bomb anywhere in the civilized world and return without refueling, do nothing to refute the statement.

Our atomic bomb develops only a fraction of the potential destructive power of the atom. Already there are rumors of a Cosmic Bomb. Unless we change our present policy, it won't be long until:

> Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
> Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!

--*Tom Nichols.*

FINANCIAL SLUMP

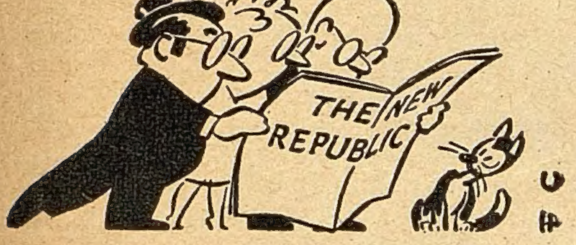
BOWIE, TEX.—There have been quite a few financial lulls in our history, and probably there will be more. Communism thrives anywhere with lower standards of living, regardless of whether these standards are temporary or permanent.

So now is the time to start thinking about what we're going to have to do to combat Communism in this country during the next fianancial slump.—*H. C. Kalhoefer.*

We'd suggest trying to prevent the slump first.—VOX POP EDITOR.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.—Ruth McN. says (Vox Pop, November 23) that men like Henry Wallace can be helpful to the government as objective critics. Maybe! But what's so objective about being an editor of that pink publication, the New Republic? Only bankers, schoolteachers, and college professors read it. Birds of a feather do still flock together, but I don't see them accomplishing anything.—*Charles H. Chesbro.*



JOB SECURITY

NEW YORK, N. Y.—All this talk of job security is what's ruining the country today. The United States was built on the grounds of individual initiative. Security dulls the senses; it destroys ambition; it makes for weakness of character. The man who had to scale fish and sell it from door to door is the man who appreciates his own good fortune when he builds up his own career and comes out on top.—*C. T.*

OPTIMIST?

BOSTON, MASS.—Paul W., who calls the protest vote defeatism (Vox Pop, November 23), is anything but an optimist himself. He takes the line that the better of two evils is the only sensible course to pursue. But he's wrong. Accepting the better of two evils is defeatist itself. If enough people would stop settling for that, they would constitute a majority and, as such, could separate the bad from the good and fight for something that is all good instead of for a compromise.—*Carol I.*

OLYMPIC UPSETS

WAYNESBORO, PA.—Irving Wallace's Let's Call Off the Olympics (November 16) was read with interest, and I heartily concur with the writer's conclusions. Many incidents in the various Olympic Games have created hard feelings that threatened to become international issues.

The 1908 Olympics, for one, developed bitter feelings between England and the United States, nations using the same mother tongue. What can we expect from nations speaking different tongues and living under widely different environments?

Let us have a cooling-off period before we again start world-wide athletic competition. Make the United Nations organization function first.—*M. H. Landis.*

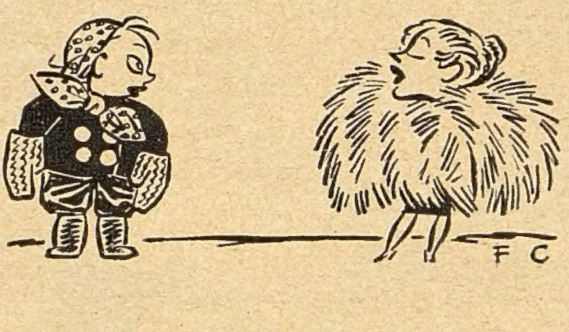
BOONE, IA.—So the Poles wouldn't believe Helen Stephens was a woman and not a man until she was stripped, after she broke her own record in the 1936 Olympics dash by six seconds. I don't doubt it. They should have examined Miss Stephens for wings!

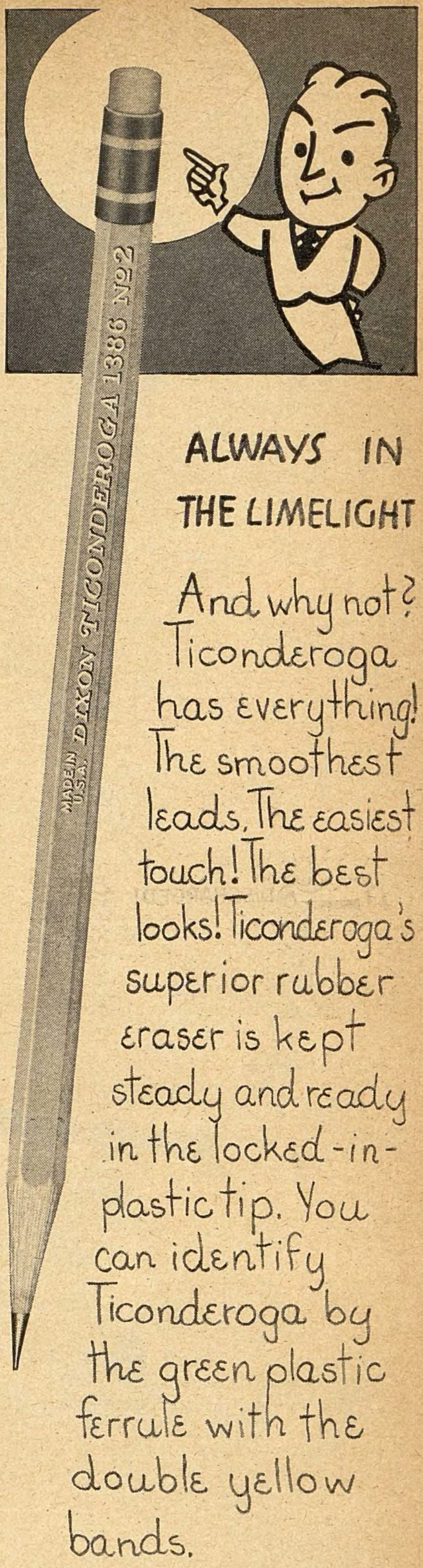
Anyone that can run the dash in 5.9 is probably neither man nor woman.—*H. F. Smith.*

The article should have read "six tenths of a second," not "six seconds."—VOX POP EDITOR.

FOOTBALL ATTIRE

STEUBENVILLE, OHIO—I gathered that the clothes the models were wearing in Helen Faith Keane's fashion feature, No Man Likes a Cold Woman (November 16), are for football games. Well, they might be typical for coeds; but for high-school girls, fur is far out of style. This is what most of us wear to a football game: overalls, knee-high boots and socks, heavy jackets (particularly navy peacoats that formerly belonged to our brothers), a warm scarf for our heads, and thick mittens.—*N. K.*





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It would take a lot of fingers (and toes) to count up how much the Bell System accomplished in 1946 – the busiest year in our whole history.

3,400,000 telephones added

25,000,000 more calls a day handled

$700,000,000 new equipment made and installed to expand and improve your service

1,800,000 orders for telephones cleared – of the 2,100,000 orders held on V-J Day

160,000 net increase in employees – total now 640,000

$400,000,000 increase in payroll

120,000 war veterans reinstated and employed since V-J Day

The story of the year was one of determined progress, despite shortages and many post-war problems. And most calls went through fast.

For 1947, the Bell System aims to go forward to still better service for more and more people.

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

One thing's almost certain, reports Mr. Stowe: Death will dance to the gypsy fiddles in inflation-mad Budapest's streets this winter

PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

People in Budapest lit their pipes with ten-million-pengo notes in last summer's disastrous inflation.

Anything Can Happen in Hungary

BY LELAND STOWE

Budapest.

THE last time I saw Budapest—in October, 1940—it was the gayest capital in Europe. France had fallen; the entire Continent was submerging under the war's long blackout. But the bright lights of Budapest flooded the terrace cafés along the Franz Josef Quai. They spun twinkling arches along the river's sweeping bend. From seven great bridges they strung seven glowing strings of pearls across the dark bosom of the Danube. On the high hill, on the Buda side, the vast Hapsburg palace etched a proud, majestic silhouette.

Wherever we dined, restaurant tables were heaped with delicacies. The choicest Tokay and Bikover wines flowed freely and gypsy violins ceaselessly poured out their throbbing melodies. Their songs were even more intoxicating than the Tokay; and the superbly chic Hungarian women—living up to their reputation as Europe's most beautiful—seemed more intoxicating than either. The night clubs were the most de luxe to be found anywhere east of Hollywood. Budapest as a setting was well beyond the talents of a Cecil De Mille, and it was peopled with feverish, reckless pleasure-seeking crowds. While Europe was burning, life here was a whirling *czardas* dance from dusk to dawn.

Today you come back to a Budapest that has learned the hard way. Like many other European capitals, Budapest will never be the same. The cables of five of the city's bridges still hang disconsolately into the Danube, symbols of German spite. A naked skeleton dome stands upon the shell-torn walls of the great imperial palace. Heaps of rubble and burned-out buildings clutter every section of what was one of the world's loveliest cities. Yet the people who live among these ruins still show an extraordinary Magyar energy. Their young women still walk like queens. The gypsies still play with the same mad abandon. You soon sense that the Magyar spirit remains the same.

But you may also sense—as I have in these past few weeks—that everything else in Hungary is still in a state of change; that anything may happen almost any day. What I write today cannot fully anticipate what may be happening here by the time these words can get into print. For there are sober observers here in Budapest who are convinced that Hungary's greatest trials and most serious upheavals lie directly ahead. No one can predict what the coming winter will hold. Somehow the Hungarians survived the terrible inflation which completely destroyed the pengo when it hit the quadrillions to the dollar last June. But a second inflation of the newly created florin threatens to follow—if it has not already begun before this reaches you. And another inflation, if uncontrollable, would be more than these impoverished people could bear. Street rioting—bloodshed—something close to civil war. . . . These are disasters which the luckless Hungarians may not be able to escape. For there is a definite limit to human endurance.

But whatever the headlines from

(*Continued on page 46*)

E. CHIRIACKA
46

ILLUSTRATED BY ERNEST CHIRIACKA

Nocturne Creole

BY JAMES ASWELL

After only two hours of marriage, she was fleeing into the pleasure-mad streets of New Orleans—to what strange adventure she could not know

IN TWO PARTS—PART ONE

NEW ORLEANS seemed to rock gently to the orgiastic pulse of Mardi Gras. Above the bumbling crowds, above the rosy fog of the flares, above King Zulu grandiosely drunk in his jungle paint, above the rowdy debutantes on the Float of the Seven Sins, above the sad dark wind that was blowing a storm of confetti hearts down Canal Street—above all this and much, much more—things were happening in a hotel room.

They weren't original things. A boy and a girl had been married that afternoon and had begun to quarrel. Over nothing and over all the important things—how this character Pierre had come over to their table in Larabie's and she had been too nice to him. As little as that—and as much.

Hank wasn't putting up with any individual coming up to his table two hours after he was married and trying to date up his wife. A damn Frenchman, at that. . . . But you've got to be civilized in this world. . . . Not in his book. If that was civilization, to have some personality barge in and ask for a date and be greeted practically with open arms—*two hours* afterward.

You know how those things are. There is a point at which a quarrel either collapses of its own triviality—or becomes a deep hurt. This one passed the line.

Hank had definitely drunk too much champagne. From Pierre, he got into the business of Maryse being Creole, which was the dumbest move he made, the move that tore it.

"You struck my friend! Just to show off. You are a boor, that's all you are."

He lost his temper utterly.

He slapped her.

She slapped him back. Then she got out of there.

Maryse Ducros Smith, late pony of the line at the Chi Chi Club in Manhattan, was a negligible chip on the surface of that monstrous carnival.

She was a small, dark, twinkling child who seemed rather to have been poured and cooled than to have merely grown like so many girls. She had been on her own, dancing at the Chi Chi Club, since she was fifteen; she wasn't inclined to take much from anybody.

"Maryse—"

He called her.

But it was too late. She had had all she could stand. Blinded for the first time by tears, she fled down the dim corridor. She heard a shuffling as he attempted to follow. Around the first turn she slipped between the closing doors of an elevator and dropped, sardine-packed in a crush of laughing, costumed maskers, toward nowhere in particular. But away from love.

MARYSE DUCROS SMITH, late pony of the line at the Chi Chi Club in far-off frosty Manhattan, was a negligible chip on the surface of that monstrous carnival. She spun out into it from the revolving door of the hotel and it took her. It propelled her forward, up to Canal and a witches' twilight of sizzling flares; down a dark side street, past many green-shuttered doors; past a raucous bar where a fight was going on, with people in masks and evening clothes watching, as crowds watch excavating in New York, apathetically; past a papier-mâché dinosaur having its head adjusted; and then, gradually, into a zone of increasing dark and quiet.

"Oh, *Hank!*" she sobbed once, involuntarily. And, realizing, immediately withdrew the invocation. Hank was gone.

No more Private Hank of the fugitive golden hours of leave, of the aching multiplying months still overseas after the war—no more Hank Smith whose memory had kept her dedicated as she twinkled away her eighteenth and nineteenth birthdays in the powdery glow of the Chi Chi chorus line. . . .

Pushing forward fiercely through the grinning secret street faces, her heart an angry rebuke to the Dionysian throng, she began the old, unadmitted search for any guilt in herself, which is the second wave of every quarrel. She'd done nothing wrong! Not the smallest thing.

Of course, she hadn't told Pierre about Hank. Or Hank about Pierre. But there'd been no need. Pierre hadn't been in Hank's department.

There hadn't been the slightest tremor of the thing she felt toward Hank, ever. Pierre was a thin eager-faced boy who had fought with the French Maquis and, one foot frozen, had escaped to England in the final months. And he was French! And bound for New Orleans as soon as he could get his papers fixed, to take a job in the export house of his father's friend's cousin.

She had had three dates with him. He was gallant and gentle; there was a link of interest based on France and New Orleans, on loneliness and laughter.

She had told him about the mysterious estrangement of her family; told of the great-uncle and great-aunt, long dead now of course, whose address she had copied from a scribble in her mother's papers, an address she carried for luck in the little gold locket at her throat.

"I will search the history of them for you," Pierre had said, "when I get to New Orleans."

BUT then she began to see things happening behind Pierre's eyes. Time to break off. She did. It was the only decent course. Presently Pierre was a cheerful, faded interlude.

Hank landed at New Orleans. He wired. She wired back she'd come and marry him and maybe he could find a job there if he liked the town.

All these things flashed along a reel as she walked. It was a mild March night, swaddled in fog; the many bands playing blocks away seemed near and sad on the damp air. She thought: This is the wrong city. This is not my New Orleans.

She was now deep in the Vieux Carré: narrow streets, low buildings,

(*Continued on page 49*)

ILLUSTRATION BY A. LEYDENFROST

PEACE—OR HELL ON EARTH

BY STEPHEN WHITE

An atom bomb one thousand times more powerful than the Hiroshima one is now possible. A top science writer tells what would happen if one exploded

If you read the gossip columns, or listen in at cocktail parties in Washington, you have probably collected a good many hints lately about bigger and better atom bombs. The ominous remarks range from predictions of an atom bomb ten times as big as we have, now to Harold Laski's terrifying statement about a bomb that can wipe out a large part of the Middle West. Usually they quote as authority an unnamed nuclear physicist.

Trying to track the hints down, I have talked to most of the important nuclear physicists in this country about a super-A-bomb. They have taken out their scratch-pads, drawn diagrams and figures, and come up with some answers. Sometimes they have said, "I can't go any further because of security, but you can probably reach a pretty good conclusion on your own." Always they have said, "This is only guessing, and I am a scientist. I am willing to guess for you, but only on the condition that you don't use my name."

The whole matter of super-A-bombs is so far out of the realm of normal, prewar physics that the best guesses by the greatest authorities can be wrong. Accept that as a preliminary apology, and let's go on to look at some of the things these men have told me.

For the sake of a good round figure, we can consider a bomb one thousand times as big as the A-bomb we have now. To begin with, is there such a bomb in existence? Unanimity among the experts: there is not. There may be sketches for such a bomb. The physicists working for the government won't tell, naturally, and the others don't know. But all of them are certain it does not exist yet as a weapon.

An artist's idea of how Newark would shrivel under the terrific heat of a super-A-bomb exploded 15 miles over the city.

But can such a weapon be built?

Probably. We spent about two billion dollars and some six years building the A-bomb. When we got it done and delivered, we had a bomb about two thousand times more powerful than the biggest blockbuster. To step this up another thousand will be a good deal more difficult in one sense, and a good deal easier in another.

The difficulty lies in the fact that we pushed our knowledge of the atom to its utmost in building the A-bomb. We applied all the science we had and ended up without reserve knowledge. A visitor to the meetings of the American Physical Society is appalled by the fact that basic scientific knowledge has advanced not a single major step since the war began.

But the physicists know the direction in which they would have to travel to build the bigger bomb, and they know they are on the right track. Many months ago it was pointed out that the biggest secret of the atomic bomb was the one we gave away at Hiroshima: the fact that an A-bomb will actually explode. Everybody knows that by now, and if you stop to think about it you will realize how important it is.

So, averaging out the difficulties and the advantages, it is probably a good guess that another two billion dollars, spent under the same conditions of urgency, would produce this super bomb, a thousand times more powerful than the one we have.

Delivering such a bomb would be another major problem. It would not necessarily be a thousand times heavier or a thousand times bigger than the present bomb. Most of the weight and size in our A-bomb is taken up in the mechanism for detonating the bomb, and the explosive matter itself is probably not more than seventy-five pounds or so.

Our imaginary bigger bomb would probably derive its increased power two ways—from the greater amount of explosive material in the bomb, and from improved methods of detonating it. It would run into many tons, and would be an extremely delicate instrument. But remember the V-2s? A whole lot of weight can be sent into the air these days, and delivered pretty near where you want it. Make the bomb and give it to the rocket men—they'll get it somewhere.

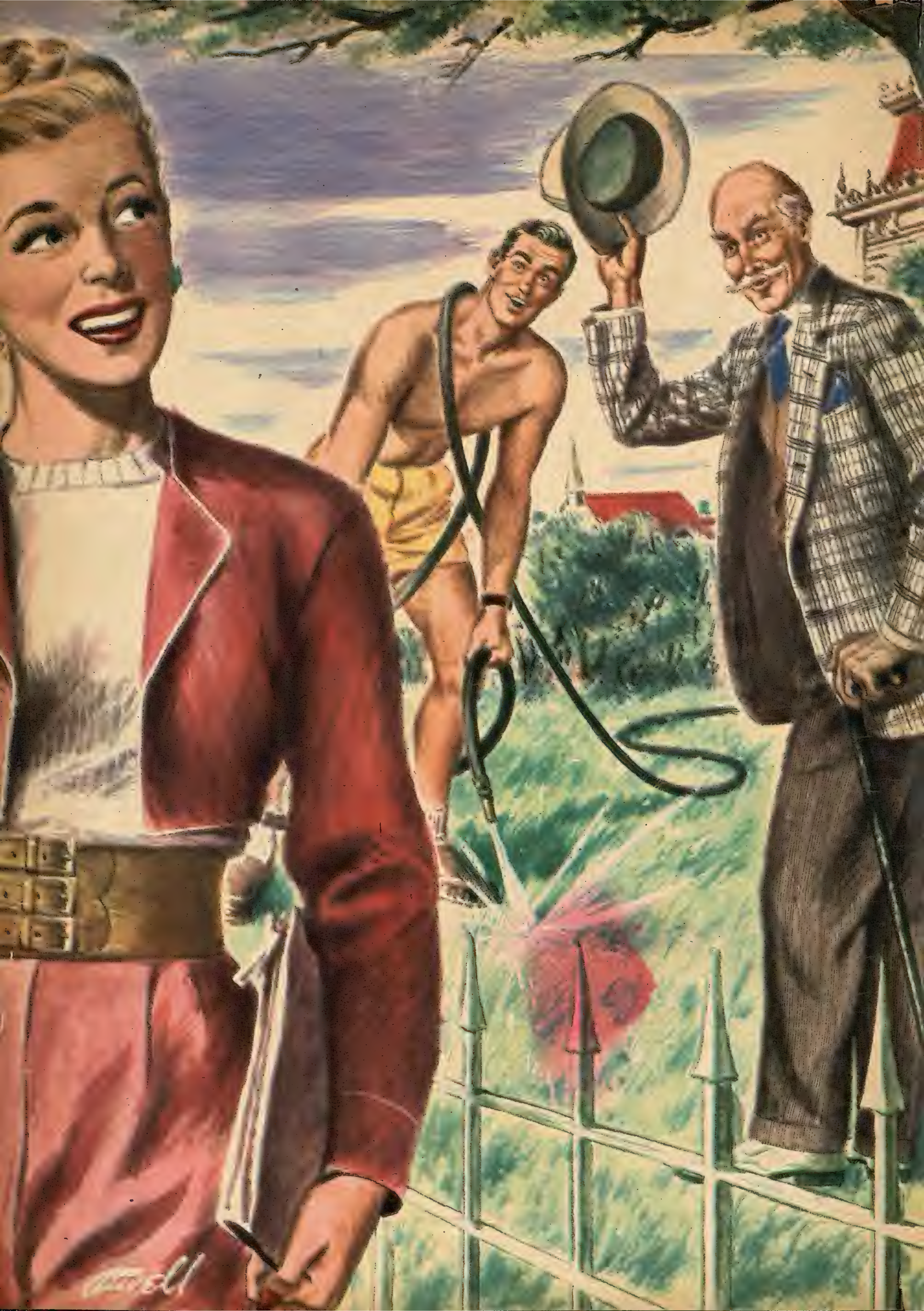
Of course it won't be enough to shoot it into the air and wait for the explosion. Dropping a bomb the size of the A-bomb, or anything bigger, becomes a major art. It's too big to waste. Consider the problem of the A-bomb alone. If it is detonated too close to the ground, it makes powdered rubbish of a small area of a city, but the rest of the city is unharmed. On the other hand, if it is detonated too high, it spreads its damage over a huge area but isn't very damaging in any one place.

With the A-bomb, this problem was carefully studied, and the height at which the bomb was detonated over the Japanese cities (which is still a carefully kept secret) was the result of complex calculations. It was many hundred feet—that much is known. Closer than that the Army will not go. Even the height at which the bomb went off at Bikini was never made public, although it was known that it was appreciably lower than the detonations over Japan.

With a bomb one thousand times as powerful, the problem of calculating the proper height is a most difficult one. Obviously, to detonate it close to the ground would be a sinful waste of good power. All the potency in the bomb would go into vaporizing near-by objects, and there is very little point in vaporizing the Empire State Building when simply knocking it around a little will put it out of commission just as thoroughly.

We might decide (and now the physicists are really guessing to det-

(*Continued on page 53*)



Beauty and the BUTLER

Every woman in town coveted Mr. Sanderson's Adonis-like manservant, but Mr. Sanderson was particular

BY GORDON MALHERBE HILLMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY THOMAS ATWELL

THERE had been a remarkable increase in traffic past Mr. Sanderson's estate since the arrival of Frederick the beautiful butler.

It was, Mr. Sanderson thought sardonically, composed of two species of humanity: young maidens who wished to admire Frederick's face and physique, and envious neighbors who desired to hire him themselves.

Mr. Sanderson knocked several thrips from his Gloire de Dijon roses and admired Frederick himself. Frederick was at present clad in yellow shorts and he was energetically watering the long lawn.

Frederick stood six feet high and had the figure of a Greek god, now nicely tanned to an old mahogany. Frederick's face was not Greek, but it was dark and handsome, and the salt wind had whipped his hair into tight little black curls. Frederick was about twenty-six, which is no age at all for a butler.

However, he was the most decorative male human being that East Harbor was likely to see and he added greatly to the long rose garden with its clover-starred grass and its great green border of tossing trees.

He was not yet much of a butler, but he soon would be if Mr. Sanderson had anything to do with it.

Frederick laid down the hose and loped gracefully to where Mr. Sanderson stood, tall, thin, bald-headed, and looking rather like a Roman senator, aside from his clothes, which were shocking.

"Sir," said Frederick, "that Mr. Dawson, he was over earlier and offered me ten dollars a week more than you're paying."

Mr. Sanderson took that information calmly. "And what did you do, Freddie?"

Even Frederick's scowl had charm. "Told him no. He wouldn't let me run around in shorts all day and get a nice suntan."

"Dawson," Mr. Sanderson said, "has delusions of grandeur."

Frederick's face twisted up into an agreeable perplexity. Frederick, Mr. Sanderson had discovered early, was a simple soul and equal only to the most elementary jokes.

"Yeh," said Frederick finally, "he's a great big goof."

That settled Mr. Dawson, and Mr. Sanderson only hoped that all his other avaricious friends and neighbors could be disposed of as easily.

Without Frederick, Mr. Sanderson, who was uncomfortably conscious of his sixtieth birthday, would not have been able to open his shore house at all, since his aged cook and his equally aged parlormaid had seen fit to retire.

"Got to take the laundry down to Mrs. McLane's," Frederick told him and galloped away.

Mr. Sanderson got out his large green watering pot and made a mental note of the fact that Frederick showed more interest in the subject of laundry than was entirely natural. He would have to look into that.

And since everyone in East Harbor was having servant trouble, he would have to wage constant warfare to keep his butler at all.

He recalled how he had found Frederick serving as a floorwalker in Bloomberg's department store. Frederick had much preferred to acquire a high tan in Mr. Sanderson's garden. Mr. Sanderson had been quite sure he would. He beheld Frederick now, still in his shorts, going down the road at a good hard gallop. It seemed unlikely that a mere matter of laundry would make him hurry so.

There was a sharp sound of hoofs and an excited black horse came into sight at a canter. Seated sidesaddle was Mr. Sanderson's sister, Althea.

She pulled her indignant mount up, slipped from the saddle, and tied him to Mr. Sanderson's gatepost.

Mr. Sanderson put down the watering pot. "Good morning, Althea. You're looking splendid."

This was entirely true. His sister had a Panama hat pulled down over her blazing red hair, she was wearing a white salt-sack coat, a black skirt, and her best boots.

AS SHE came clattering up the steps, Mr. Sanderson was conscious that it wasn't for his benefit she had dressed up so much.

He hastened to the porch to meet her. Althea was really quite striking with her tawny hair, her creamy skin, and her great green eyes.

She sat down.

"Don't you think the garden's doing well this year?" said Mr. Sanderson.

"Stop beating about the bush, Joe." Althea told him in her velvet soft voice: "You might as well make up your mind now that I'm going to get Frederick away from you."

Mr. Sanderson began to organize his defenses. "No! No! Won't do at all at your age, having Freddie galloping around your garden in his saffron shorts. Cause a scandal."

His sister's green eyes blazed. "Are you insinuating anything?"

Mr. Sanderson hitched up his

(*Continued on page 64*)

Mr. Sanderson gazed upon his handiwork and found it good. He even, for a moment, had the mild wish that he were twenty years younger himself.

Escape to Reality

After seeing movies overseas during the war, a noted director concludes they've got to reflect the conflicts of our times

WILLIAM WYLER

BY WILLIAM WYLER

IT happens that motion pictures are my business, and for four years during the war I had been away from the factory. Distance and new surroundings (England and Italy were my beat) had given me a new perspective. Like millions of men, I returned to my job with the firm conviction that what we had before wasn't good enough. The new world would have to be a better one.

When you are making films, or carrying on any intensive work, you lose perspective. Schedules bear down on you. There is the incessant pressure of time. It isn't possible to pull back and get a good view of yourself. The war and the war years were a wonderful opportunity to view the job in perspective.

My last Hollywood picture, Mrs. Miniver, was a great story of England at war. We had tried to re-create it faithfully on the screen. It was a good try but not a perfect score. That I realized when it came my turn to go to England with the Army Air Forces.

While abroad I saw films from time to time—some of them good, many of them bad. There was time now and then to think about films and film making. I wondered why so few films and so few plays honestly reflect the conflicts of our times. Every age, every generation, every decade, every year, has some battle of mind, of emotion—some social cause that flavors the time. Why does the screen seldom find these conflicts?

We find them in our journalism and can be justly proud of our reportorial achievements. Sharply focused, penetrating news coverage and photographic techniques that practically achieve a third dimension give significance and meaning to the flow of information and news from country to country, from peoples to peoples. But this accuracy in reporting events and people is seldom achieved on the screen.

I could see the need of vast improvement in taste and design. On the screen, the rooms in which people—even the most humble people—live always seem about three times as big as they should be. I have been told small rooms are difficult to light. It doesn't sound convincing.

Why do film women always look as if they had just come from a beauty parlor or been gowned by a smart Fifth Avenue shop?

Why is such a fuss always made about a blue gown or a red one, a yellow or a white hat in films that are photographed in black and white?

To me, a man should seem at home in his home. He should move with ease in a background with which he is familiar. He should know where chairs are without looking for them. He should be as one with his setting—his home. This union and oneness of man and his background are seldom found on the screen. A home isn't a home unless people act at home. Certainly it isn't a home if it seems like a stage.

These things recurred to me again and again throughout the war. They were in my mind when I returned to Hollywood to take up where I had left off.

I discussed with producer Samuel Goldwyn—to whom I had been contracted for The Best Years of Our Lives—the things I hoped to do. He was sympathetic and enthusiastic.

We went to work with Robert Sherwood, Pulitzer Prize dramatist, on the screen play to be made out of the MacKinlay Kantor novel, Glory for Me. The result is The Best Years of Our Lives. The story tells of three men and of the collision of their ideals with the realities of this postwar world. Their home is a typical American city (our model was Cincinnati). One finds his war bride has been unfaithful, another that time has left a great gap in his understanding of his family, the third that peace can never erase all of the marks of conflict. All three must work painfully out of their confusion.

How we injected realism and honesty into the action of this drama is best told in the seeing. Let me mention some of the other aspects.

Gregg Toland, Goldwyn's great cameraman, entered into our conspiracy against convention. He experimented with the most sharply focused photography that the screen has ever seen. He foreswore the shimmering close-ups that have been a Hollywood tradition. He did without the softly diffused romantic images. His camera caught people as they are in a breathless, deeply revealing honesty. He put no make-up on the men and only a light street make-up on the women.

We sent Myrna Loy and Teresa Wright and young Cathy O'Donnell out to stores in company with our costume designer, Irene Sharaff, to buy the kind of clothes they would buy and wear in the lives they live on the screen. Not only that, but we asked them to wear them for a few weeks so that the clothes wouldn't look too new. Almost all of them were black or white or gray. Some were remade in gray or black.

George Jenkins, another recruit from Broadway, designed the sets with the same basic idea in mind. Instead of acres of living space in the Hollywood manner, Jenkins made the sets actually smaller than life size. Moreover, I had the actors rehearse their scenes for hours before the cameras turned, so that the furniture and the layout of the rooms became as familiar to them as they would be to the people they were portraying. The result is, I think, an unusual experiment in realism; in seeking to create the feeling that, just as these people represent ourselves, so do their surroundings represent those they live in.

TO the average moviegoer all these details may not be apparent in the finished film Indeed, I hope that many of them are not. For it is when these background details are false that they are most likely to be conspicuous, like a discordant trumpet in a symphony.

Whether noticeable or not to the audience, these things are essentials to us who make drama. They all contribute to that illusion of reality for which we strive.

When The Best Years of Our Lives is seen on the screen, it may be a very revealing and a very human story, with about as much heart as the screen can hold. I hope so. What may or may not be seen is the thinking and planning of many years to create a picture of our times in which you, as a member of the audience, will feel that you are looking not at the screen but at life.

THE END

What the Other Fellow Makes

BY GUNTHER STEIN

You may not earn a million a year, but probably you get as much as some governors and college presidents

YOUR income may not be up with that of Henry Ford or Deanna Durbin. It may not even compare well with those of such relatively low-paid men as the Chief Justice and the President of the United States. But if you are a competent mechanic or a fairly successful storekeeper, you may rub shoulders on the national salary scale with the governor of your state, with college presidents or high-ranking officers in the army and navy.

On the other hand, if you are a college graduate in a white-collar job, you may find yourself below the income level of a skilled industrial or railroad worker. As a schoolteacher, a nurse, or a librarian you may not even be far above the income bracket of men and women doing unskilled manual work or receiving unemployment benefit.

When you compare your pay with the enviable size of top incomes as published by various agencies of the federal government, don't overlook what the tax collector has been doing since the war to reduce inequalities.

In peace, as in war, there are always some two or three score Americans who make more than a million dollars a year, averaging a proud $37,000 a week. One of them in 1945 was Academy Award winner Leo McCarey of Going My Way fame, with $1,113,035 paid to him in salary and percentage of profits by Paramount. The others in the million-dollar bracket remained anonymous, for their incomes came from interest, dividends, and big business deals, and the Treasury discloses only top salary incomes, as reported by employers.

There are usually 4,000 to 5,000 families in the next highest income brackets, ranging from $100,000 to $1,000,000, who receive an average of about $3,500 a week. Those who make their annual fortunes on salaries and bonuses are almost exclusively business executives and film people, the only recent exception being Dr. Frank H. Lahey ($2,100 a week) of the famous Boston clinic that bears his name.

Charles H. Strub of the Los Angeles Turf Club ($8,970 a week) is the current leader in this ever-changing group, while Charles E. Wilson ($6,090 a week), heading General Motors' record list of forty-three executives with more than $75,000 annual salaries, has been one of the steadiest place holders in recent years. Here you find also F. A. Countway of Lever Brothers with $7,900 a week, C. W. Deyo of Woolworth with $4,830, Winthrop W. Aldrich of the Chase National Bank with $3,000. Henry Ford II, with $1,800 a week, barely makes the grade behind his company's B. J. Craig ($2,600).

Famous film people often pop into the $100,000-plus bracket one year and disappear from it the next. Producers and directors like Darryl F. Zanuck of Twentieth Century-Fox ($5,150 a week), Walter Wanger of Universal ($7,900), and Louis B. Mayer of Loew's ($17,500) usually outrank most of your favorite movie stars. Off and on, however, you will find in this bracket the names of stars like Deanna Durbin ($6,280 a week), Barbara Stanwyck ($6,200), Bing Crosby ($5,660), Spencer Tracy ($5,200), Katharine Hepburn ($4,360), Carmen Miranda ($3,870), Greer Garson ($3,850), and Edward G. Robinson ($2,440).

The President of the United States ($1,442 a week) probably finds it harder to make both ends meet than anyone in his income bracket of $50,000 to $100,000 a year, which comprises some 15,000 families. The same is true of the Chief Justice ($394 a week) and the members of the President's Cabinet ($288). Together with almost half a million successful business men and top-ranking professionals, those leading officials of the federal government are in the category making $10,000 to $50,000 a year or an average of $346 a week.

The group of 700,000 families in the $5,000- to $10,000-a-year-bracket, averaging $129 a week, is probably the most surprisingly "democratic" in its social composition. It ranges from brigadier generals in the army and rear admirals in the navy ($115 a week) and governors of states like Idaho ($144) and Maine ($96) through independent business men, medium-ranking professionals, and successful farmers to well-paid motor mechanics and other highly skilled manual workers whose weekly wages run from $100 to $140 and up.

If you earn around $3,600 a year or about $70 a week, you are right in the middle of the national income scale. For this is what the "average American family unit" would get today if each of its forty-five millions obtained an equal slice of the country's unprecedented $165,000,000,000 national income.

Some ten million families, earning from $3,000 to $5,000 a year, are in this broad and steadily growing middle category. Here, too, free enterprise proves itself unbiased toward higher education and conventional prestige in the ways it rewards greatly differing kinds of useful labor. Headmasters and headmistresses, for example, with average weekly incomes of $73 a week, are only slightly above those of welders ($72); and bank officials with their $78 weekly average lag behind the $85 of average shop stewards.

Further down the income scale, another ten million families are making $2,000 to $3,000 a year or around $48 a week—little more than the average earnings of manual workers in the country's manufacturing industries whose wages for a forty-hour week the Department of Labor put at $43.07 in July.

Twelve and a half million families follow in the $1,000-to-$2,000 bracket. Those are the incomes of unskilled manual workers and the less well-to-do among the farmers and small business men, of the bulk of the white-collar class, copy typists, file clerks, etc., and

(*Continued on page 56*)

On the Record

BY ROBERT T. FURMAN, JR.

Changing her voice to fit each part, Ingrid Bergman magically brings to life the Pied Piper of Hamelin in a recording.

From Churchill to Congo Pygmies, from birdcalls to the human heartbeat—they're yours to listen to at the drop of a phonograph needle

IF you'll allow the family record player to take time off from grinding out music, it can do just about anything. It can teach you to recognize the call of a wild bird or fill your living room with the fearsome crack of a primitive whiplash among the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

It can be hilarious one minute with Beatrice Lillie's I'm a Camp Fire Girl and He Was a Gentleman, and change its mood completely in the next for Ellen Terry's historic reading of "The quality of mercy is not strained." It even has such a way with children that it can keep them from peeling off the wallpaper on rainy days!

It was a surprise to Edison that the phonograph came to be used primarily as a musical instrument. He had thought of his invention as a talking machine pure and simple. But in recent years his original conception has begun to be realized. Now the phonograph is being permitted to do more talking and it is making a first-rate job of it. The popularity of "diction records" is soaring, for the spoken word can do many things that the written word cannot.

Great plays, for example, were written to be listened to, not to be read. Shakespeare never thought of his plays as reading matter. Their lines were to be spoken on the stage, which is one good reason why so many people find them dull reading. But drop your needle on Maurice Evans' Columbia recording of Hamlet. As Evans builds up to the Ghost's hoarse accusation of "Murder most foul," cold creepy excitement runs up and down the spine of everyone within hearing. Shakespeare on disks by Evans, Gielgud, and others is exciting *theater*.

Poetry, too, has found that disks may be more effective than type, particularly when contemporary poets who have good voices read their own works. Many of them, including Robert Frost, Archibald MacLeish, Carl Sandburg, and Edna St. Vincent Millay have produced recordings which, if lively sales mean anything, are more satisfying than bound volumes.

As a rule, stage and radio stars have been called upon to speak for the great poets of the past. Cornelia Otis Skinner has recorded for Victor an Anthology of English Lyric Verse which includes favorites ranging from Keats' Ode on a Grecian Urn to John Masefield's Sea Fever. Longfellow's The Arrow and the Song and Tennyson's In Memoriam are included among many others in Great Themes in Poetry, a six-record Columbia album by Basil Rathbone.

Readings of many of the best works in classic and contemporary literature have been recorded as talking books—for the blind. More than 1,000 titles are now in distributing libraries all over the country. They range all the way from the Psalms of David to the stories of Irvin S. Cobb.

Talking book records require a special reproducer, having a turntable which revolves only half as fast as the usual phonograph's. Each side of the 12-inch disk plays fifteen or sixteen minutes, and it takes from fifteen to eighteen disks to record an average book. This means a reading time of approximately nine hours, although Gone with the Wind takes twenty hours.

Talking books are not available to the general public. In the interest of keeping their cost down, permission has been secured from the publishers who hold the copyrights of the works recorded to use them free or at a nominal charge, with the strict understanding that the records are solely for the use of the blind. This fact and the necessity for a special machine have kept talking books out of general circulation.

They have been a godsend to the blind, but they could also gives hours of pleasure to others. It seems altogether likely that a way will be found to make them, in some form, available to everyone.

The nearest things to them which can be bought in the record shops these days are dramatized versions of old and modern classics—for examples, Raymond Massey in Abe Lincoln in Illinois and Dickens' Christmas Carol with Basil Rathbone as Scrooge.

Similar recordings made especially for children are helping to push the sales curve of juvenile records up. Charles Laughton plays Captain Ahab in Moby Dick, Thomas Mitchell is Long John Silver in Treasure Island, Walter Huston does Rip Van Winkle, and Ginger Rogers is Alice in Wonderland in the Decca Personality Series.

The great natural interest which children have in recordings has been harnessed to teach some of the important lessons of childhood. Schools are using more and more records. And at educating adults, the spinning disks are old hands. Language instruction records have been available for years. Now their scope includes lessons in everything from primitive tongues to Esperanto. There's even a bit of comic relief: Spoken English and Broken English, by Bernard Shaw.

If you have operatic ambitions, the equivalent of a year and a half of study has been put on records by Queena Mario, one-time Metropolitan Opera star and teacher at the Juilliard School of Music. If you're learning to play an instrument, the Add-A-Part records will help you by providing only the accompaniment. It's just like playing with an orchestra. If you're studying shorthand, your phonograph will dictate to you by the hour at a variety of speeds. The same thing goes for lessons in Morse code.

If you're a physician, your phonograph will bring you the characteristic sounds of the human heart, both normal and abnormal. If you're a naturalist, you can reach for an album of American Bird Songs. Folk songs of many nations and the rituals of primitive peoples have been recorded. The Belgian Congo records, made in the jungles of Africa by the Dennis-Roosevelt expedition, are a sample of Negro and Pygmy culture. And there are hundreds of other in-the-field recordings for scholars, students, and just plain listeners.

Not the least of the phonograph's accomplishments is the fact that it is recording history. There's a documentary album called the Liberation of Paris, compiled from the sounds of gunfire, the frantic commands of cornered Nazis, an interview with an I.F.F. underground fighter, and victory speeches by De Gaulle and General Eisenhower. Many of Winston Churchill's speeches are for sale to the public and the same is true of other international figures, including Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Walter Huston takes off his coat to record an album of Rip Van Winkle. Cultural items like this retail for about $2.50.

Young as the phonograph is, it has preserved the words of many whose voices are now history. Recordings of William Jennings Bryan, William Howard Taft, Admiral Perry, Will Rogers, and Andrew Carnegie are available, or soon will be again. Documentary records such as these have already taken their place, as an important part of the archives of all nations.

During America's war years lack of materials and manpower put a damper on sales of records. Now the recording studios and the industry's pressing machines are busy again, but production is still way behind the demand. If, as manufacturers estimate, they are going to sell 20,000,000 or 30,000,000 new record players, talking records can expect more than their share of the gigantic boom that is bound to follow.

The prices of the records discussed here range from one dollar for the Gramophone Shop's Beatrice Lillie comedy to $52.50 for the course in operatic singing.

New companies as well as old are making plans. One newcomer is bringing out birthday and greeting cards: small records with the greetings sung or recited by radio stars. You'll be able to write your own message on the back and mail the record for three cents.

Another new organization has, as both investors and talent, such famous names as Jack Benny, Edgar Bergen, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Eddie Cantor, and Fibber McGee and Molly. You'll be able to have your favorite radio stars whenever and as often as you want them.

THE END

EMIL HERMAN PHOTO

Children enjoy books even more when they can listen to the text.

HOLE IN NONE

BY JOHN D. MacDONALD

Imagine making all the lucky strokes of a lifetime again—in a single golf match? Mr. Fingerhaver did

MR. FINGERHAVER, cherubic and bovine, sat on a bench in the locker room of the Elmwell Club.

He was depressed. He had just finished a round of golf with his business partner, Bert Upson. They had started golf together, twenty-six years ago, and Mr. Fingerhaver had improved not at all. He now had to take a thirty-stroke handicap to play even.

He remembered Bert's air of careless superiority as he'd said, "You just haven't got it, George. No muscular co-ordination. You'll never get any better at the game."

He had tried so hard. The careful backswing—and then something always happened. He looked down at his fat arms, realizing that there was a lot of muscle under the fat. Maybe if he could try it with nobody around . . .

He padded over to the window and looked out. It was dusk. He grabbed his driver, a ball, and a tee and hurried out the side door. He walked to the seventh tee, a three-hundred-and-thirty-yard par four with a ravine to the right of the fairway.

He teed up the ball and squinted through the gloom. He wound up carefully and hacked at it. He sighed. It was as bad as ever. The ball darted diagonally toward the ravine. He walked to the ravine. The ground crumbled under his feet and he slid down the bank. His head whacked into a birch and he rolled into the brush. He propped himself up on his elbows and saw, in front of his nose, a gleaming golf ball of gigantic proportions. It glowed with pale blue luminescence. He stared—fascinated.

A remote voice said, "George Fingerhaver, it is my privilege to bestow on you one wish—by courtesy of the golf immortals who, from the nineteenth hole above, have been watching your dogged efforts to improve your game. Please submit your wish."

Mr. Fingerhaver said in a quick voice, "My wish is to always play par golf."

"I regret that we cannot grant a wish so beyond the realm of credibility," came the answer. "It's against union regulations. I can offer you a substitute. The golf you will play from now until dusk tomorrow will be composed of the best shots that you have ever made. You will make those lucky shots again."

The world darkened. Something brushed Mr. Fingerhaver's face and he heard music. The large golf ball was gone. He felt a lump over his ear from hitting the tree. He smiled.

Screwy dream. He fumbled around until he found his ball. It *was* a dream, and yet it had seemed so real. It wouldn't hurt to try. He walked up and dropped the ball on the fairway in the same spot where a ball had sat one July day in '31. On that day he had hit one that soared off and dropped into the hole for an eagle two.

He teed up, feeling silly. He lunged at the ball and heard a crisp crack. The ball disappeared. He hurried to the green, two hundred yards away. He squatted for a long time near the cup, his finger-tips touching the ball. He picked the ball out of the hole and walked back to the clubhouse.

He added figures in his head. When you play an eighteen-hole golf course for twenty-six years, no matter how much of a dub you are, luck will give you a few breaks each year. He figured out the best score he had made for each hole. His heart thumped. One eagle, sixteen birdies, and a par. Eighteen under par. Eighteen holes in fifty-eight!

He phoned Bert Upson.

"Hey, Bert. This is George. How about some more golf tomorrow morning?"

"You nuts, George? Tomorrow's a workday. Remember?"

"I mean early. Start at six."

"No caddies then."

"What's the matter? You going soft? Carry your own bag."

"I don't think I want to."

"Please, Bert. It's important. Maybe I got the game licked now. Let me play you for a hundred bucks a stroke. Only twenty strokes handicap. If I get licked too bad, I'm giving up the game. O.K.?" He bit his lip. That was funny. He'd meant to say a dollar a stroke. Then he remembered Bert's cool superiority. He'd show the smartpants!

Finally Bert said, "O.K. I think you're out of your head, but I'll meet you on the first tee at six."

Mr. Fingerhaver hung up with shaking hands. Too bad that there wouldn't be a gallery. But Bert would tell people. Then they'd point and whisper, "Fingerhaver went around in fifty-eight!"

AT SIX the next morning Mr. Fingerhaver stood on the first tee, waiting for Bert to drive.

Bert took his time. He drove and the ball sailed away with the usual finesse. Mr. Fingerhaver teed up and drove. He lunged at the ball. It clicked and soared out, not quite so far as Bert's. He remembered making a drive like that in 1940. Bert gave him an odd look and said, "Nice drive, George."

The first at Elmwell is two hundred and ninety-eight yards, par four. Mr. Fingerhaver was sixty yards from the green. He selected a seven iron and dug at the ball. It carried far over the green. It dropped against a small boulder in the rough and bounded back out. It rolled up and stopped eight inches from the cup.

Bert said, "That was the damndest thing. Saw you do that one before, didn't I?" Mr. Fingerhaver nodded. Bert lofted on and holed out with a par four. Mr. Fingerhaver took a birdie three.

The second is four hundred and twelve yards, par four. There is a hill in the fairway and traps beyond the narrow green. Bert raised his eyebrows when Mr. Fingerhaver's drive carried two hundred and twenty yards. He teed up his own ball and tried to push it. He sliced into the rough, even with Mr. Fingerhaver's ball. His second shot was a high iron that cleared the crest of the hill and left him with a fifty-yard approach. Mr. Fingerhaver's second shot was a mighty smash with a spoon. It rolled across the green into a trap. Bert relaxed and dropped one close to the pin.

Mr. Fingerhaver waddled down into the trap. He hammered at the ball. It jumped out in a cloud of sand, hit the edge of the green, leaped into the air, rolled gently down to the cup and slapped in. Bert turned pale. He missed his putt, taking a five to Mr. Fingerhaver's birdie three.

ON THE third, Mr. Fingerhaver sank a thirty-foot putt for a birdie two. Bert took a four. On the fourth, he slammed a shot off an elm tree. It rebounded off a pump, rolling between two traps—stopping inches from the cup. Bert took six to Mr. Fingerhaver's birdie three.

On the fifth tee, as Mr. Fingerhaver addressed the ball, Bert sat on the ground and held his head in his hands. Mr. Fingerhaver waited impatiently. It was wonderful to have a score so low. Eleven strokes for four holes. Bert had nineteen. Eight hundred bucks ahead without counting the handicap. He smiled fatuously.

Finally Bert lifted his ravaged face and stared with haunted eyes at Mr. Fingerhaver. "Four holes! Four birdies! All done with the same spavined contortion. Birdies off rocks, trees, pumps. . . . All the books are wrong. All the pros are wrong."

Mr. Fingerhaver coughed impatiently and drove off. Bert stood up

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT STORY

ILLUSTRATED BY GLENN THOMAS

and smothered a drive out a hundred and forty yards. Then Mr. Fingerhaver got his fifth birdie.

The sun climbed higher. So did Bert's score. He stumbled as he walked. Mr. Fingerhaver played like a man in a dream.

When the second nine was half over, Bert had started to mumble. Mr. Fingerhaver added up the sleek rows of twos and threes after each hole.

When Mr. Fingerhaver drove off on the eighteenth, a long screaming slice into the rough, only to have the ball bound back out and sit gleaming on the fairway, Bert threw his own ball as far as he could toward the green. Then he panted for a few seconds before he trotted out and got it. He teed up and topped it. Mr. Fingerhaver estimated that his profit would be about fifty-seven hundred dollars, including two thousand for the twenty-stroke handicap that he didn't need.

Bert hacked out of the rough. His second shot wasn't up to Mr. Fingerhaver's first. He slammed it again, a high iron that faded off into the trees at the right of the green. Instead of waiting for Mr. Fingerhaver to shoot, he blundered out into the line of fire. Mr. Fingerhaver's wood shot was a screamer. It glanced off the side of Bert's head and, direction corrected, ended up inches from the pin.

Bert lay on the fairway, his eyes closed. His bag of clubs lay a few feet away. Mr. Fingerhaver rubbed his wrists and slapped his face, but he didn't come out of it.

THE doctor told Mr. Fingerhaver he could go in and see Bert. Bert's face smiled wanly at Mr. Fingerhaver.

"Guess you'll have to tell me what happened, George. The doc says I got a concussion. My memory's shot. I can remember leaving the house before six, but I can't remember another thing."

Mr. Fingerhaver gulped. "You said —you mean you can't remember?"

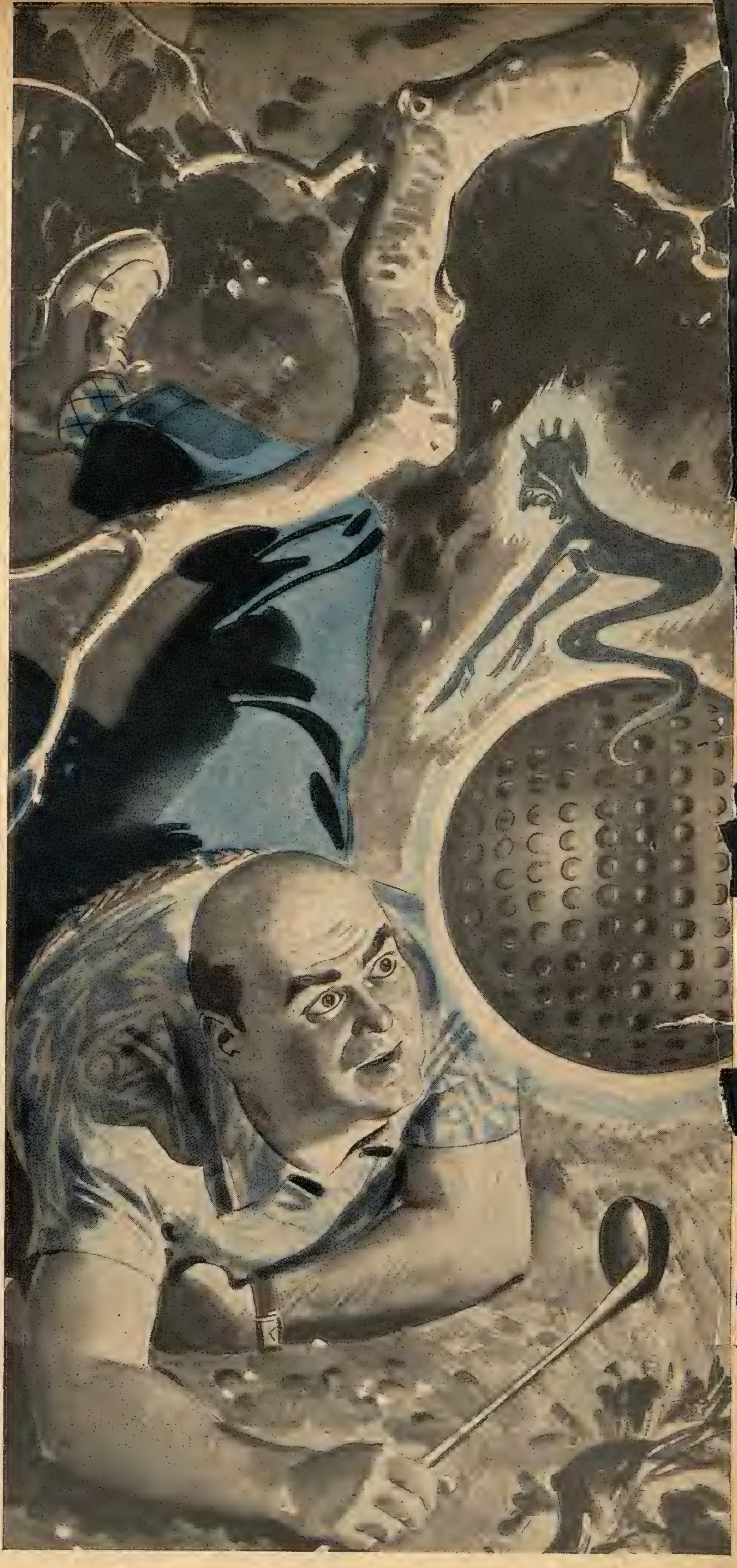
"That's right. I even had a screwy dream—that I was plumbering every shot and you were shooting nothing but birdies. Imagine you shooting under par!"

Mr. Fingerhaver said, "I shot a fifty-eight." His fingers were tight on the score card in his pocket.

Bert looked up at him and said, "Oh, I see. We played nine holes before I got hit?"

Mr. Fingerhaver smiled woodenly down at Bert and crumpled the score card in his red fist. "That's right, Bert. Nine holes."

THE END



"I regret we cannot grant a wish so beyond the realm of credibility," came the answer. "It's against union regulations. I can offer you a substitute."

NO VACANCIES

What Do You Know About 1946?

BY TED SHANE

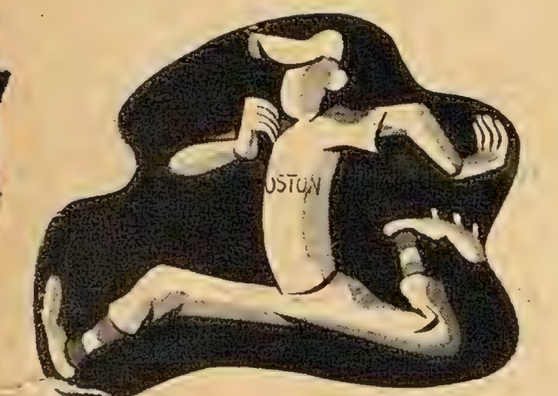
1. Who won the Rose Bowl game? The Sugar Bowl? Orange Bowl?

2. When finally contacted by radar, what was alleged to have radared back, "Sorry, no vacancies!"?

3. What king was voted out of office by the score of 12,000,000 to 10,000,000? What king died mysteriously June 9? What king got voted back into office? What king was not voted back after requesting it?

4. What congressman longed for a Mead shortage?

5. Who said: "He can run but he can't hide!"? "I got careless!"?



6. They made sports history. Identify: (*a*) The Splendid Splinter. (*b*) Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside. (*c*) The Battle of the Century Note. (*d*) Levi Jackson. (*e*) Thomas Barbella and Anthony Zaleski. (*f*) Jack Kramer. (*g*) Assault.

7. Chicken ranching was the theme of one fantastically best seller; nut ranching of another. Name them.

8. What raids made on America by Mexicans caused as much excitement as those of Villa's?

9. On reaching ninety, who said the trouble with old age was that the head kept going but the legs didn't?

10. Identify these: (*a*) Bertram M. Campbell. (*b*) Roxas. (*c*) The Durants. (*d*) George Washington Hill. (*e*) B. Carroll Reece.

11. Three countries were admitted to the UN. Name them.

12. What 243-pound man gave away his weight in diamonds?

13. Identify the following phrases: (*a*) "Had enough?" (*b*) "Putti-putti!" (*c*) "To each his zone!"

14. Name the (*a*) first Nazi to hang after the Nuremberg trials; (*b*) the one who took his own life; (*c*) the three who were acquitted; and (*d*) the American who said the trials were illegal.

15. (*a*) Who pitched the second no-hit game of his major-league career? (*b*) Whose fate hung for a time in the Lapse of the Cards? (*c*) Who walked when the Reds were behind?

16. Name Mexico's President.

17. (*a*) What senator with B. O. in his name won re-election? (*b*) What Southern senator attained wide fame on the radio? (*c*) For the first time since 1906 the Senate will be without a what?

18. In the cinema: (*a*) Who hid whisky in the chandelier? (*b*) Who made a comeback and won the Academy Award for her acting? (*c*) Who showed two convincing reasons for seeing The Outlaw?

19. In labor: (*a*) During what strike was it said the only Van around is Johnson? (*b*) What group of men who constantly go out on strikes voted not to organize a union? (*c*) What group earning as much as $10,000 a year struck for $5,000 wage hikes?

20. How did these make fashion history: (*a*) A piece of wire? (*b*) The hankie?

21. There were some changes made in the world of romance. Pair who is or ain't going with whom:

Kathleen Winsor
Henry A. Wallace
Spruille Braden
Constance Bennett
Olivia De Havilland
William E. Dickey
Marcus Aurelius Goodrich
Walter Reuther
O. John Rogge
India

Larry MacPhail
Argentina
Harry Truman
Orson Welles
The U.A.W.
Rita Hayworth
Britain
Gravel Gertie
Her Fifth
Attorney General Clark
Artie Shaw
B. O. Plenty

22. For whom were black sox worn when he suddenly took ill?

23. What smash hits on Broadway featured an Iceman? A lady sharpshooter? The returned G.I.? What play won the Pulitzer Prize?

24. What World War II great American general died? What important American jurist?

25. A producer turned to newspaper writing; a newspaperman turned producer: both successfully. Name them.

26. Name the first Negro to play a white man in makeup on Broadway?

27. What small coin figured in a $750,000 swindle?

28. For the first time in five years what came back to Madison Square Garden to gladden Society?

29. J. W. Fulbright made what startling suggestion November 6?

30. Scientific advances were made. Explain: (*a*) Pilot ejector. (*b*) Ship with a 240,000-mile ceiling. (*c*) Device for exterminating 180,000,000.

(Answers will be found on page 69)

Take a Piece of Red String

. . . or go out and get plastered — with mud. Everybody's got a "cure" for the long-suffering arthritic but the doctor!

BY NOEL C. COBB

NOT every man, woman, and child in the United States has arthritis—although it is by far the most prevalent of all chronic diseases. But, as any one of us 7,000,000 who do suffer the "slings and arrows" of this outrageous fortune can tell you, every man, woman and child knows a cure for it. They not only can tell you; they do. All you have to do is to wince taking off your topcoat and the man in the next seat will say, "Got arthritis? I know a sure cure for it. My brother-in-law had it. Just let several bees sting you, and the venom will cure you."

Or limp into a village bookstore, and the little gray-haired shop owner is all solicitude. "Now, let me give you something to fix that arthritis," she says, reaching beneath the counter and bringing forth a three-foot piece of red string.

"Take this and tie it around your body just above the joint with arthritis. Then look for a man plowing a field. When you find one, take off your shoes and walk barefooted in the freshly turned furrow. All the arthritis will go out through your feet into the ground, and you'll *never* have any more pain."

A Negro porter in Chattanooga will give you a shiny horse chestnut. A Maine farmer will press a mummified potato upon you. Both will solemnly affirm that such pocket pieces will effect cures. They've seen it work "time and again."

Go to Phoenix, Arizona, a haven for arthritics from all parts of the nation. There you'll find on any sun deck a dozen sufferers baking out some of their aches in temporary bliss and discussing—cures.

The red-string-and-plowed-earth cure? "Oh, no, that's not right," the corporation attorney from Chicago says earnestly. "I'm certain the cord has to be white, not red, and I've never heard of any cord treatment that didn't call for nine knots to be tied in it before being put on."

"The red-cord treatment is just a variation of the fresh-earth baking," a fish-cannery executive from Seattle contributes. "You lie in a freshly plowed field and have someone cover your body, right up to your neck, with the fresh earth. You do that at noon and stay covered for an hour. It's quite beneficial, I've been told by arthritics who've tried it, and if these fever treatments I'm taking at the hospital don't cure me —as I am sure they will—I'm going to use the fresh-earth treatment."

Most of those on the sun decks have gone to joint-disease specialists from New York to California, and have tried all the medically recognized therapies. But when these treatments fail, as they often do in this baffling disease, the old wives' cures come around again. Pain does queer things to otherwise keen minds.

Although arthritis carries with it severe and crippling pain, it has never caught the public's interest as have the more dramatic white plague of tuberculosis and the dread poliomyelitis. Yet it produces more invalids than heart disease, cancer, and tuberculosis combined, according to Dr. Alfred E. Phelps of New York's Hospital for Special Surgery, and rates second as a cause of disability. While nonsufferers are apt to gibe: "So you're getting old and your joints are stiff!" the rheumatoid type of arthritis often strikes children in their early teens; and the majority of victims contract the disease in their twenties and thirties. It's osteoarthritis which most commonly afflicts middle-aged and older men and women, though often the victim has both general types.

Few diseases are more discouraging—both to patient and to doctor—than arthritis, for so little is known about its cause. Worry, infection, poor diet, all are believed to contribute to susceptibility. In the early stages victims are often relieved and sometimes cured by X-rays, artificial-fever treatments, vaccines, injections of gold salts. Yet in apparently similar cases these treatments will have no beneficial results whatsoever. Penicillin's magic fails to touch arthritis.

Most doctors believe that a germ is somewhere at the bottom of the trouble. And they can hope, now, that proof will soon be forthcoming. A campaign to raise $2,500,000 for a research program to discover the cause of arthritis is under way, its sponsor list headed by Lionel Barrymore. The work will be centered in Hot Springs, Arkansas, at the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital.

And it's about time we knew something about the oldest disease known to man. Fossilized bones of our most distant progenitors show that those old fellows also suffered from the disease. You can see signs of arthritis in the exhibits of the Smithsonian Institution. Even the dinosaurs had it.

Perhaps the Java ape men or the Neanderthal men walked around with ten-pound polished stones as lucky pieces to ward off the disease. By the Stone Age, men probably had found that heat brought relief. History records that the sulphur baths of Hercules were popular centuries before the Christian era. Today the spas also draw thousands for treatments ranging from endless injections, infra-red- and ultra-violet-ray baking, to dips in paraffin baths from which the sufferer emerges coated like a tallow candle.

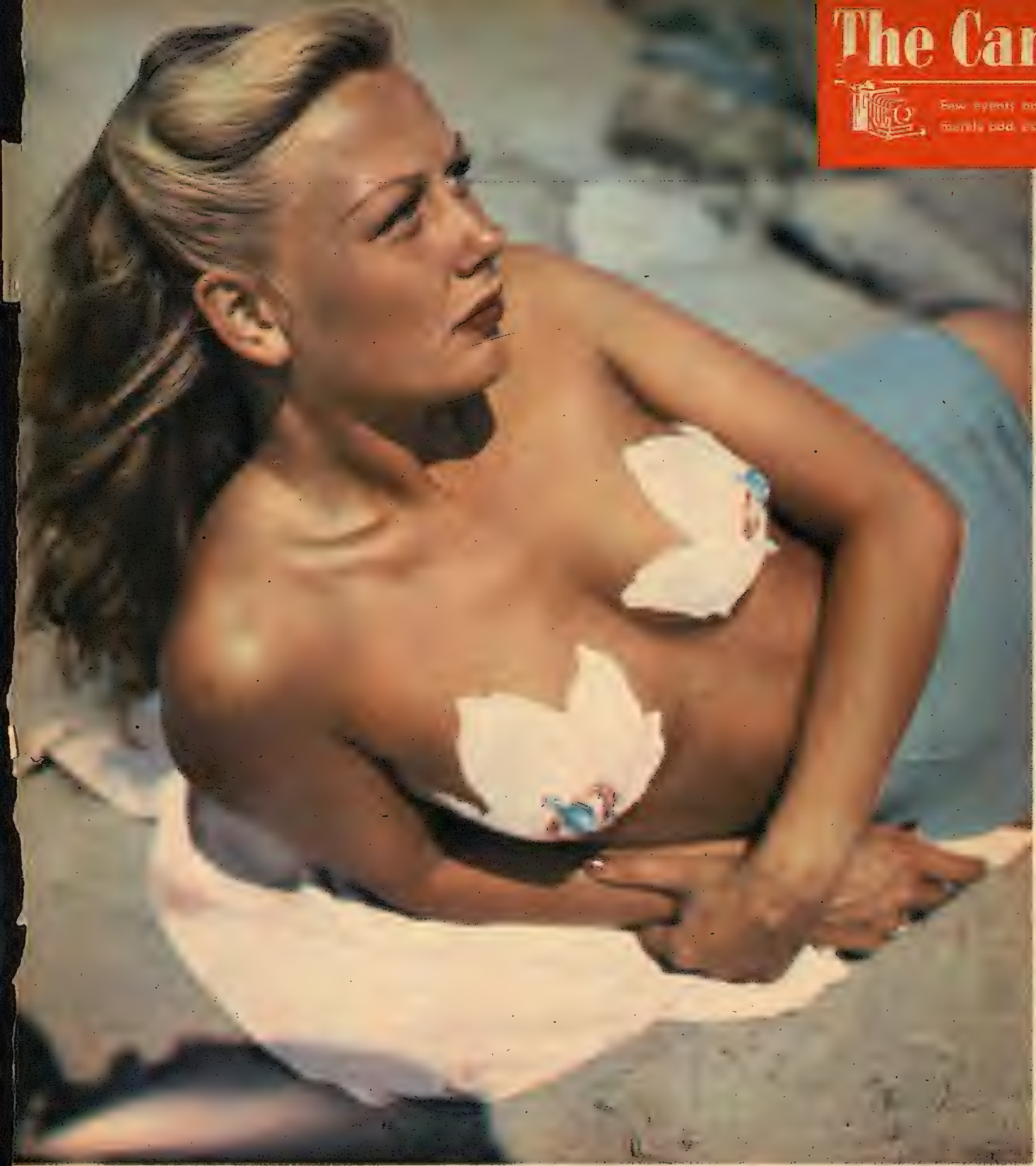
At least our scantily draped arthritic ancestors got the beneficial rays of the sun direct, so they didn't have to take massive doses of vitamin D, with the attendant danger of toxicity.

Vitamin D's possible ill effects are slight, however, compared to those which may result from chrysotherapy, or gold-salts injections. By these, some arthritics are benefited; others, less fortunate, develop fever and nausea, temporary blindness, or

(*Continued on page 61*)

The Camera

Few events on Earth and few people gre
worlds odd, escape the camera's nimble

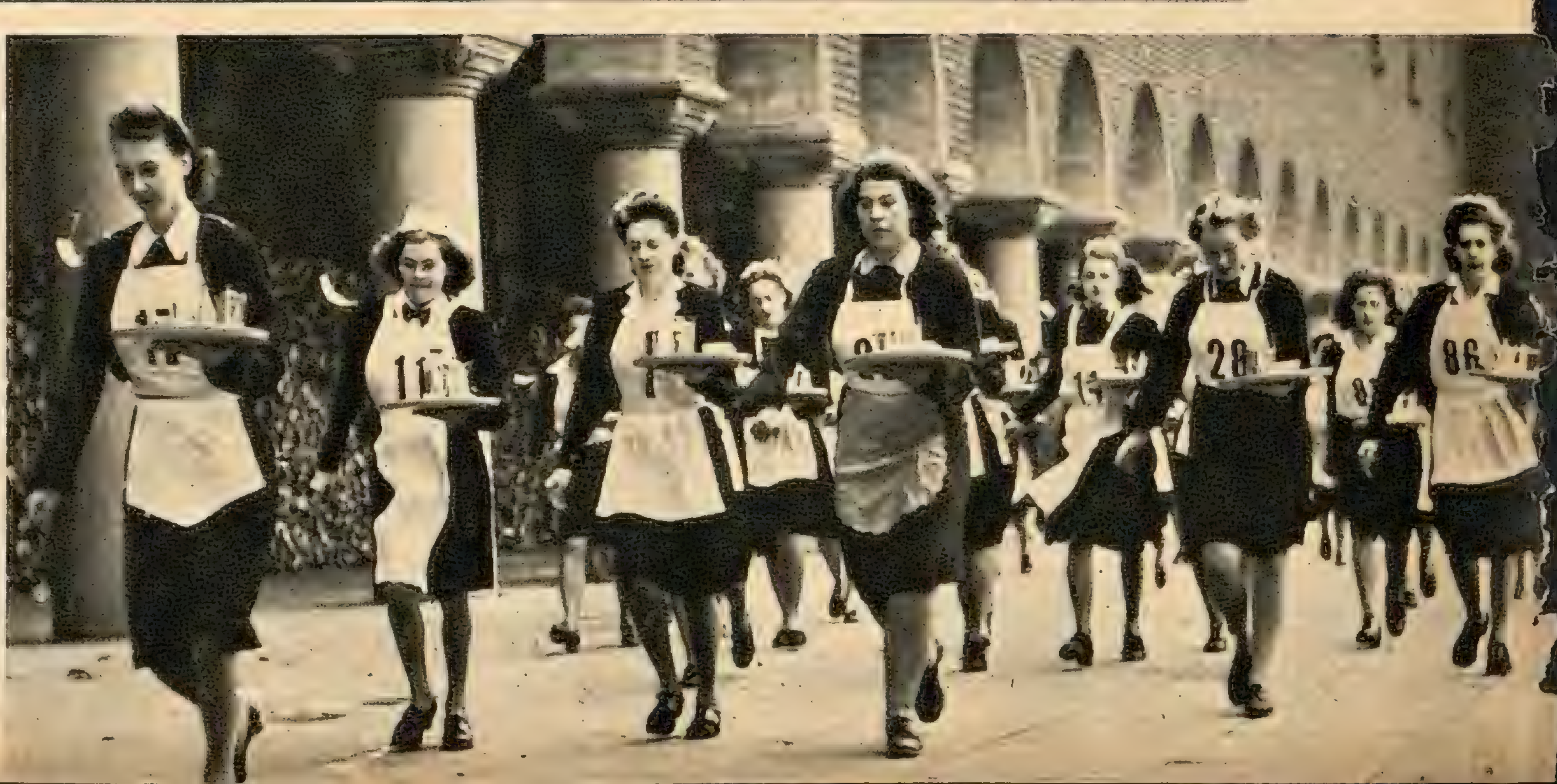


THE ANSWER—to France's diaper swim suit is a floating flower bra worn by Rosemary Landou at Malibu. She claims a mysterious adhesive helps foil the surf and the power of gravity.

GLOBE KODACHROME

MAN TO MAN—Gorilla and homo sapiens see eye to eye in this exceptional stud caught recently by a alert camerama in the St. Louis Zoo.

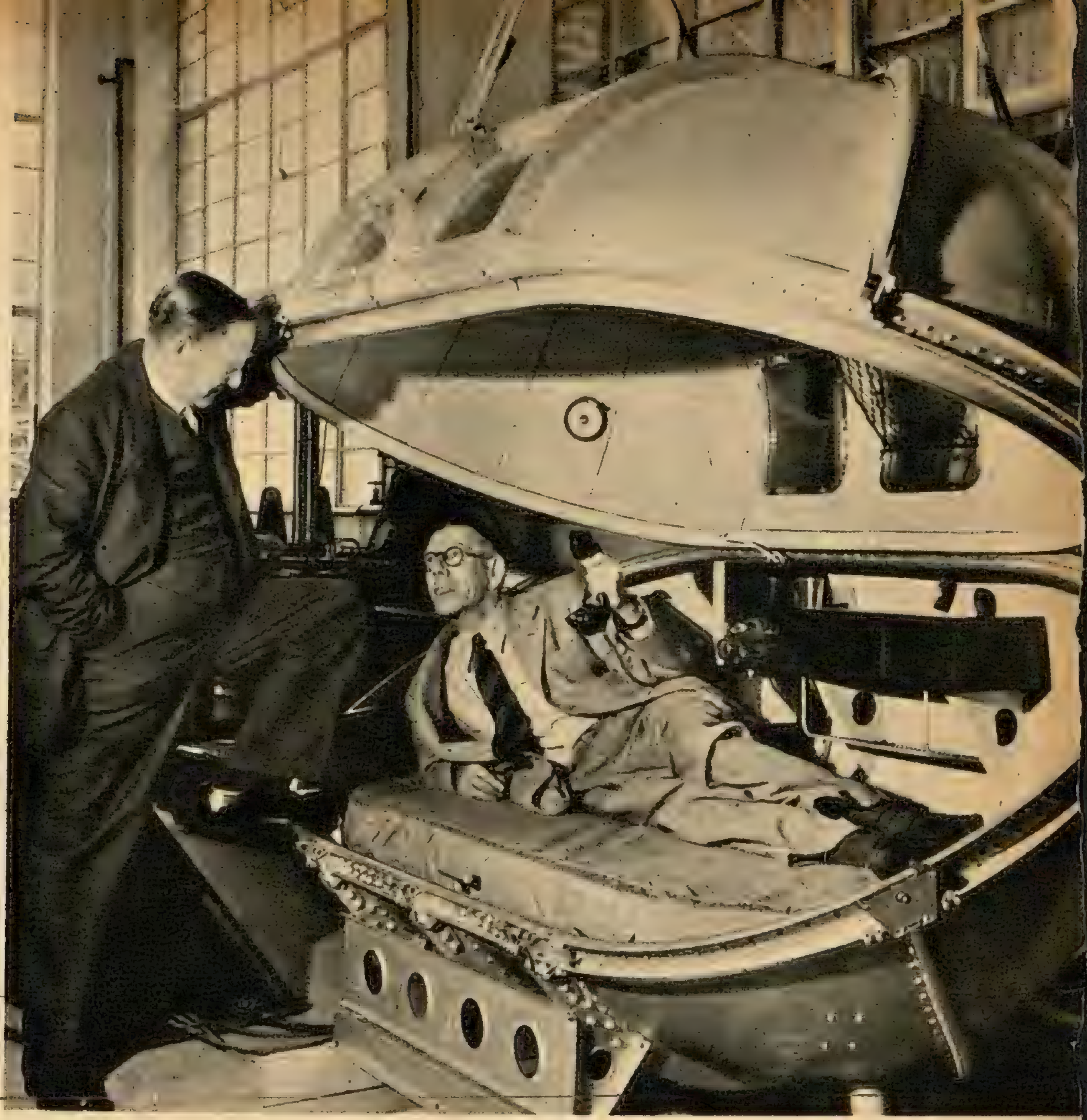
GRAFLEX PHOTO CONTEST



QUICK SERVICE—Fifty Stockholm waitresses raced a mile carrying glasses of water. For each drop spilled, two seconds were added to the time. That's why the winner was third.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

HOW MANY?—Madison Square Garden's glass wall to protect the crowd makes it look as if five hockey players were ganging upon one man.
ACME PHOTO

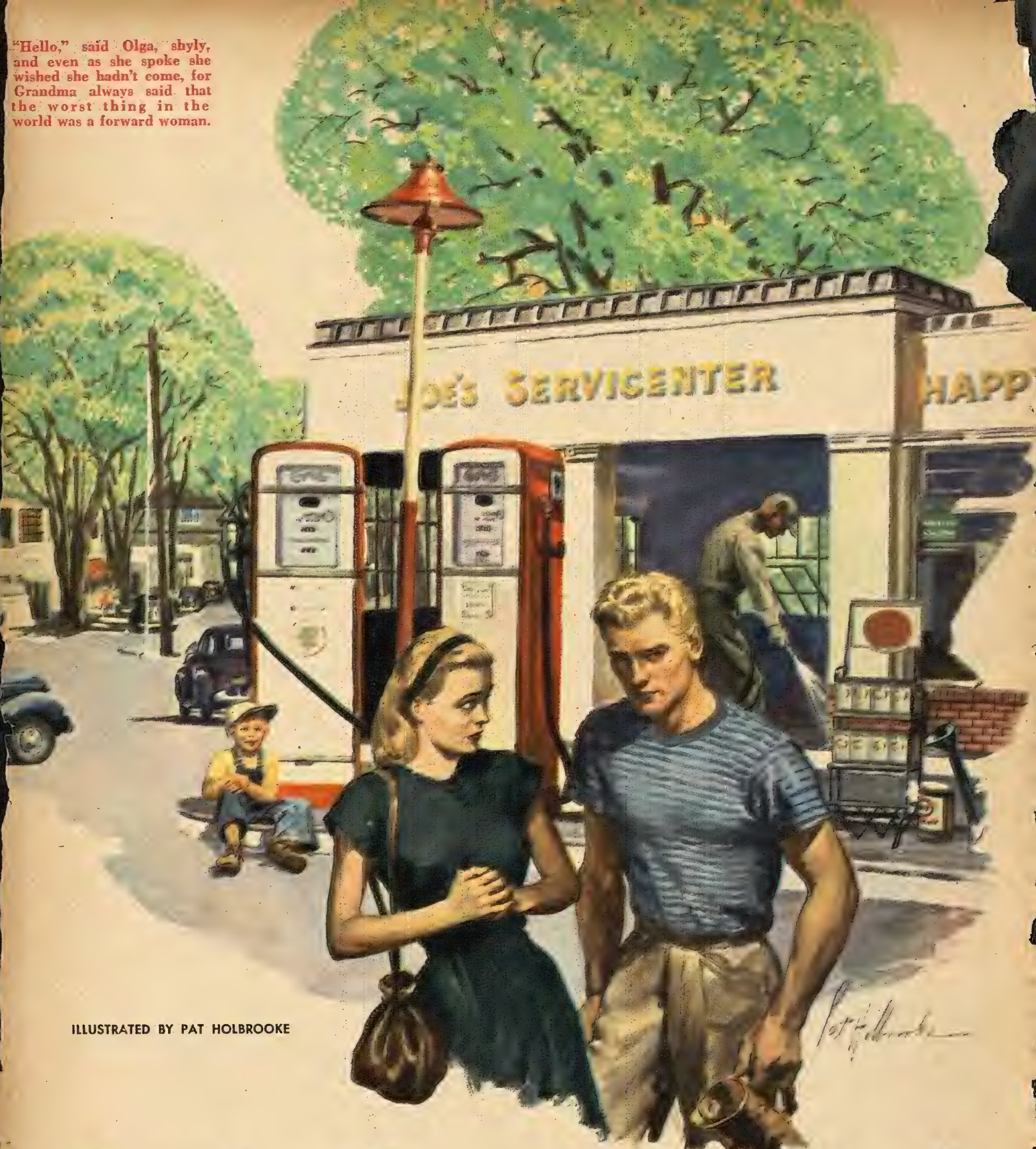


EASTER EGG—A comfortable pressure chamber designed for Winston Churchill for flying at altitudes over 8,000 feet—doctor's orders.
KEYSTONE PHOTO

KAPUTT—Kurt Daluege, Nazi overlord in Czechoslovakia, who ordered the massacre of Lidice, hangs ignominiously in the city of Prague.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

▶

"Hello," said Olga, shyly, and even as she spoke she wished she hadn't come, for Grandma always said that the worst thing in the world was a forward woman.



ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

The Girl Who Couldn't Say No

• • • until Grandma died, leaving her with $10,000

and a string of suddenly ardent suitors

BY NAOMI JOHN WHITE

HAVING been reared by a grandmother who had eyes like an X-ray machine and a heart like a tray of ice cubes, Olga Lane just naturally grew up saying "Yes," and "You're right," and "Of course." After twenty years of living with Grandma, saying "Yes" was as natural with Olga as breathing.

Which was all very well and good until Grandma—in the midst of showing the carpenters how to shingle the roof—fell to her demise (nobody was surprised), and left Olga ten thousand dollars (everybody *was* surprised). Ten thousand dollars, as money goes, isn't a great deal of money, but in Plainview, Oklahoma, ten thousand dollars made Olga virtually an heiress. Plainview, Oklahoma, goes in for spinach, by the way; *not* oil wells.

So it was really a distinct surprise to Olga, after Grandma's funeral, to discover how many friends she had. She hadn't known that she was so popular a girl. Or that she had so many beaux.

For up until now, Olga had considered herself somewhat on the plain side, a girl who would probably go through life with nothing more romantic happening to her than having Tommy Baker wave to her of mornings as he drove by on his way to work at the corner filling station.

But now it seemed that a great many of the young men of Plainview, and some not so young, had been admiring Olga for a long time.

Arthur Hammer told her first. Arthur Hammer was an up-and-coming young man who had been educated in the school of hard knocks.

He came over the week after the funeral and sat in the front-porch swing and told Olga.

"What I figure, Miss Lane—Olga," he said, "is that a lovely young girl like you needs someone to look after her."

Olga disengaged her hand from his, tested it gingerly for broken bones, and stared fascinatedly at Arthur's Adam's apple. Arthur had the most active Adam's apple she had ever seen on a young man.

"Yes," she said, because, after all, she had been saying "yes" to Grandma for twenty years, and you don't break a habit like that overnight.

The Adam's apple ran up spiritedly to Arthur's jaw, and Olga found herself being kissed.

It was not, as kisses go, very satisfactory, for Olga found herself concentrating more on the fact that she had been caught off balance and her neck hurt than anything else. And then, although Olga's twenty-first birthday was yet some three weeks off, she had not been kissed very often. And most of those times had been by Uncle Hiram.

"Oh, but look—" said Olga, when Arthur had released her, which he did as suddenly as if he had been clinching a sale in hardware. (Arthur was in the hardware business: "Hammer Our Hardware—You'll Like It.") She smoothed down her hair nervously. "Oh, but look, I didn't mean to say I would—" And then she hesitated, partly because, after all, Arthur hadn't actually said he had marriage in mind.

"With the two of us," said Arthur, and he pressed her hand again so fervently that Olga winced, "we can have the finest place in town."

"Oh," said Olga, deciding that it was business, after all, that Arthur had in mind.

"Maybe even two places," said Arthur. He released her hand suddenly, to reach into his pocket, presumably for paper and pencil to do a little figuring as to exactly how much business could be increased with an extra ten thousand dollars. Olga stood up.

"If you will excuse me, Mr. Hammer—Arthur," she said backing toward the door, "I'm afraid you're making a mistake. I really—"

"Why, of course," said Arthur heartily. He stood up and put the paper back into his pocket. "You are tired. You need to rest. After all, it's been just a short time now since you lost your grandmother. A fine woman," he said. "A wonderful woman."

Olga wondered if Arthur had forgotten the time Grandma had thrown one of his best iron skillets at him.

"I'll see you Sunday," he said, and bent over as if to kiss her again. But Olga fled. She fled upstairs to her own room, and for the first time in her life she locked her bedroom door.

THE next young man who told Olga she was a lovely, fragile flower was Mr. Wallace Mayberry. Mr. Mayberry was not really a young man—that is he had taught ancient history in Plainview High School for some twenty years, and even though he wore his hair a carefully deep black, he would not be taken for someone in the flush of youth.

Mr. Mayberry came in the afternoon—this was on Saturday. He carried a bouquet of flowers which he handed to Olga with a little bow.

"I know that you probably have many flowers," he said, "left from the funeral, but I thought you might like these as your very own."

"Why, thank you, Mr. Mayberry," said Olga. "They are very nice." Obviously they were flowers that had rested on Mr. Mayberry's desk at school for a few days, for as she took them, one of the red roses gave a shudder and dropped its petals on the floor.

"Won't you sit down?" said Olga.

Mr. Mayberry gravely put his hat on a near-by table and crossed over to the padded armchair that had been Grandma's favorite, pulled up his trouser legs carefully, and sat down, putting his left knee precisely over his right knee. After some indecision, Olga put the flowers in a vase with some pink snapdragons and sat down too.

Mr. Mayberry stared at her morosely, and she cast about a little wildly for something to say. "It's a lovely day," she finally offered.

Mr. Mayberry cleared his throat and changed his right knee over to his left knee.

"Your grandmother was a very fine woman," he said. Olga hurried to agree.

"Why, yes indeed," she said. "Grandmother was a wonderful woman."

ANOTHER picture of Grandma flashed before her eyes—a picture of Grandma telling her sternly that dresses didn't grow on trees, and besides, what did a girl like Olga (the inference being, of course, that nothing could improve the looks of a girl like Olga) want with a new dress?

"And no doubt you are finding yourself very lonely," he said.

"Yes, of course," said Olga. After having Grandma tell you for twenty years just exactly what to do and when to go out and when to stay in—mostly when to stay in—it was lonely. But not *too* lonely.

Mr. Mayberry's gaze seemed to be fastened on Olga's blouse, just below her chin, and somehow the fixture of his eyes made her a little nervous, and she reached up to reassure herself that she had been properly put together.

"Miss Lane," said Mr. Mayberry.

"Yes?" said Olga. She smiled at him because he was a guest.

"Miss Lane," he said again, "I feel that a person of your accomplishments, of your youth and beauty, should not go unprotected in this wide world of bitter pitfalls."

Olga felt herself surprised as she reviewed his words. As for accomplishments, Grandma was always saying that she was certainly the most stupid, the most awkward, the most untalented girl she had ever had the misfortune to know. And Olga, reviewing twenty years of varying degrees of failure in baking and mopping and bedmaking, had to agree with her. Of course it was true that Grandma considered one air bubble in a loaf of bread and one tiny wrinkle in a sheet complete failure, but still one should have been able to get approval at some time.

As for youth, twenty didn't seem so very young. But beautiful! That was something else again! Olga could only blink at Mr. Mayberry and be amazed. Somehow the word beautiful in Mr. Mayberry's mouth seemed

(*Continued on page 58*)

Snow Rocket

BY J. JULIUS FANTA

Roaring down the mountain on the world's fastest bobsled run can't be beat for thrills and chills

SHOOTING down the icy groove of Mount Van Hoevenberg at Lake Placid, New York, on a bobsled is a daring ride that belittles all others. And you don't have to be trying for a place on the team that will represent the United States at the 1948 Olympic winter games to experience the thrill of riding down the world's fastest bob run. Anyone (for a fee) may ride as a passenger with a professional pilot and a brakeman.

On your way up to the starting place by truck you get a preview of the long, tortuous groove frozen hard on the mountainside and the high-banked, half-bowl curves on which you'll soon ride high.

Near the top of the mountain the bobsled is unloaded onto an icy ramp leading to the run. The goggled pilot takes his post at the steering wheel. With another passenger, you sit in the middle between the driver and the brakeman, whose position is aft.

Attendants instruct you how to sit and hang on by means of straps. On each side an iron stirrup holds your feet in place. Beneath the stirrups on both sides are nets running the full length of the sled, for protection in case anyone's foot should slip off the stirrup.

The brakeman gets the signal from the lookout in the starting tower that the course is clear. He gives the sled a running push and hops aboard.

At first, you wonder why they rave about bobsledding. Why, it seems like a toboggan ride! The brakeman and the driver give you a break going through Eyrie, the first big curve, by taking it slow. But now you're going faster and faster. Whiteface curve appears to rush at you. It is one of the most treacherous of the run's curves, with a practically perpendicular twenty-two foot parabolic wall.

You swerve upward into the glazed bowl of Whiteface like a cannon ball bowling around a curved surface. The sled lurches into a sudden twist as it rides high, halfway between the top and bottom of the curve. You don't dare glance downward to the icy hollow beneath as you lean out like a man walking on a wall. You swoop down out of the curve like a meteor. You realize then that bobsledding is not just another sleigh ride.

Down the straightaway through Cliffside and several smaller curves, and you see Shady Corner ahead. Shady is another twenty-two-foot, hair-raising curve, like Whiteface. It hits you like a sudden gust of wind. You slant 80 degrees off perpendicular, roaring at seventy miles an hour. The top of the rim and the great open spaces beyond seem a few scant feet away, and the groove beneath deep as the Grand Canyon. You hang on for dear life.

Then you swerve out of Shady into the straightaway. Out of Little S you thunderbolt into Zig-Zag. By now you're plunging headlong down the mountain like a plummet. Zig is Whiteface all over again and Zag is like Shady.

Ripping through Zag with runners gripping the icy curved walls and the sled all aslant, you feel a little less tense and get more of a kick out of the terrific speed and the thrilling curves.

Down the home stretch into the last straightaway and the final curve, and then past the lodge where your friends watch with admiration. You regret that it's all over so soon—within two minutes. You want to do it again. A bit stiff, you disembark, exulting: "Man, what a ride!"

The bob run on Mount Van Hoevenberg, the only one in the Western Hemisphere, was built by the State of New York for the Olympic Winter Games of 1932. Nature helping, it is the finest achievement of the designer, Stanislaus Zentzytski, the Berlin engineer, who also designed the famous Schreiberhan, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, bob run for the 1936 Olympics and other famous European slides.

The Mount Van Hoevenberg course, operated by the state, is one and one half miles long with twenty-six curves, the steepest and most thrilling being Whiteface, Shady Corner, and Zig-Zag.

Except in Olympic years, when the entire course is maintained, the upper third of the run is closed. When the trials for the Olympic Winter Games are held next month, the entire length of the bob run will be open for the first time in ten years.

The run is faster than anything Europe has to offer, and during the practice runs for the 1932 Olympic Winter Games the two German teams cracked up. One German entry piloted by Captain Werner Zahn erred in taking Zig-Zag too late, and shot over the top rim out into space; the other team shot over the top of Shady. Last winter the Dewey-Church team made the same mistake at Zig-Zag, cracking up. But the lust for speed in competition was the only reason for the mishaps. To prove that the course is safe, a riderless sled was loaded with lead bars equivalent to the weight of two men, and sent down the run from the mile mark. It negotiated the curves and finished without upsetting.

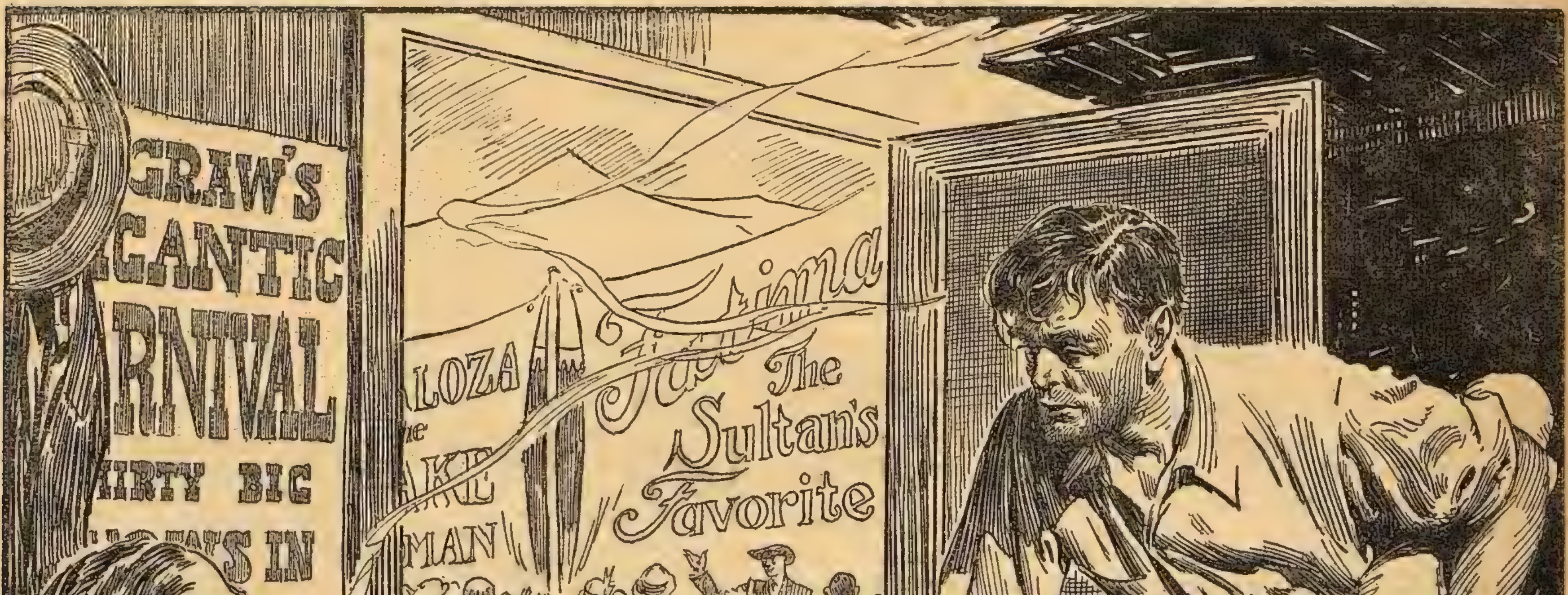
Although New York State requires you to sign a waiver to ride the bob run, bobsledding is no more dangerous than any other winter sport. As for thrills, the Lake Placid course will provide more than all the world's roller coasters combined into one.

THE END

NIGHTMARE ALLEY

BY
WILLIAM LINDSAY GRESHAM

His lust for money and power took Stanton Carlisle from the carnival world into the spiritualism racket. Three women helped him—Zeena, Molly, and the beautiful psychiatrist, Dr. Lilith Ritter. One of them betrayed him.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ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

A LIBERTY BOOK CONDENSATION · *READING TIME: ONE EVENING*

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STAN CARLISLE stood well back from the entrance of the canvas enclosure, under the blaze of a naked light bulb, and watched the geek.

This geek was a thin man who wore a suit of long underwear dyed chocolate brown. The wig was black and looked like a mop, and the brown greasepaint on the emaciated face was streaked and smeared with the heat. At present the geek was leaning against the wall of the pen, while around him a few—pathetically few—snakes lay in loose coils, sullenly uneasy in the glare.

Outside, the talker was working up to his climax. Stan turned his neat blond head toward the entrance.

". . . is he man or is he beast? You will see him living in his natural habitat among the most venomous reptiles that the world provides. Why, he fondles those serpents as a mother would fondle her babes. He neither eats nor drinks but lives entirely on the atmosphere. And we're going to feed him one more time! There will be a slight additional charge for this attraction but it's not a dollar, it's not a quarter—it's a cold, thin dime, ten pennies, two nickels. Hurry, hurry, hurry!"

Stan shifted over to the rear of the canvas pen.

The geek scrabbled under a burlap bag and found something. There was the wheet of a cork being drawn and a couple of rattling swallows and a gasp.

The "marks" surged in—young fellows in straw hats with their coats over their arms, here and there a fat woman with beady eyes.

Clem Hoately, owner of the Ten-in-One show and its lecturer, mounted a step. His voice was suddenly low.

"Folks, this creature which you see before ya has been examined by the foremost scientists of Europe and America and pronounced a man. That is to say: he has two arms, two legs, a head and a body, like a man. But under that head of hair there is the brain of a beast.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, when I say that this creature is more beast than man I am not asking you to take my word for it. Stan—" He turned to the young man. "Stan, we're going to feed him one more time for this audience alone. Hand me the basket."

Stanton Carlisle reached down, gripped a small covered basket by the handle, and boosted it over the heads of the crowd. From the basket Clem drew a half-grown leghorn pullet, complaining. With one hand he motioned for silence.

The necks craned down. The geek had leaned forward on all fours, his mouth hanging open vacantly. Suddenly the talker threw the pullet into the pit.

The geek moved toward it, shaking his black cotton mop of wig. Gently Stan eased himself out of the crowd, which was straining, looking down.

From the pit came a panicky clucking and cackling and the crowd drew its breath. Then a woman screamed; the crowd moaned. The cackling had been cut off short, and there was the click of teeth and a grunt of someone working hard.

Stan crossed the main ring of the show, moved to the gate and stood looking out on the carnival midway. Against the summer night the ferris wheel lights winked with the gaiety of rhinestones, the calliope's blast sounded as if the very steam pipes were tired.

"God a-mighty, it's hot, huh, kid?"

Clem Hoately, the talker, stood beside Stan.

"Mr. Hoately," Stan said, "how do you ever get a guy to geek? I mean, is a guy born that way—liking to bite the heads off chickens?"

Clem slowly closed one eye. "Let me tell you something, kid. In the carny you don't ask nothing. And you'll get told no lies."

"Okay. But did you just happen to find this fellow—doing—doing this somewhere, and work up an act?"

Hoately dropped his voice. "You want to know where geeks came from. Well, listen—you don't find 'em. You *make* 'em."

He let this sink in, but Stanton Carlisle never moved a muscle. "Okay. But how?"

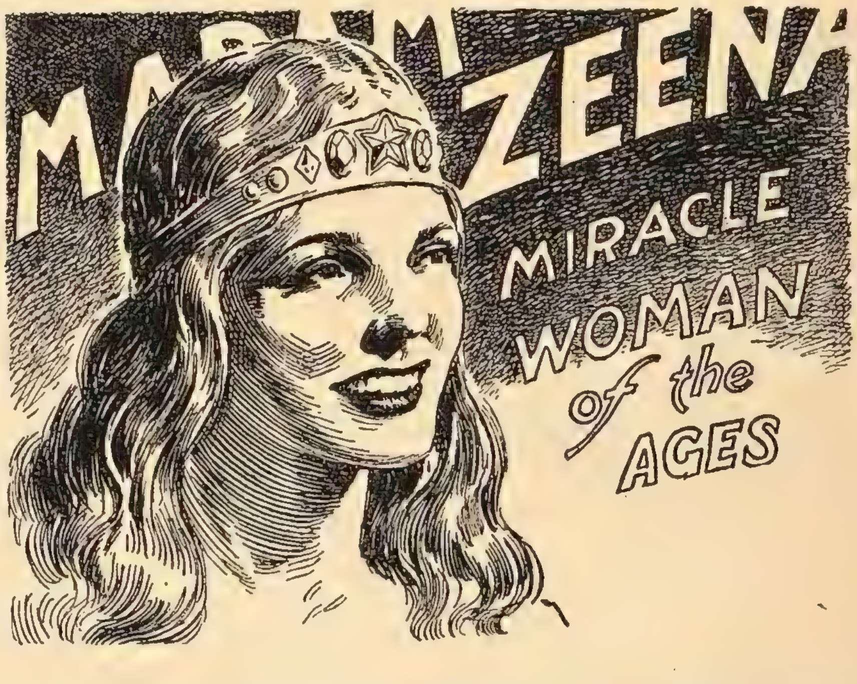
Hoately grabbed the youth by the shirt front and drew him nearer. "Listen, kid. Do I have to draw you a damn blueprint? You pick up a guy and he ain't a geek—he's a drunk. A bottle-a-day booze fool. So you tell him like this: 'I got a little job for you. It's a temporary job. We got to get a new geek. So until we do you'll put on the geek outfit and fake it.' You tell him, 'You don't have to do nothing. You'll have a razor blade in your hand and when you pick up the chicken you give it a nick with the blade and then make like you're drinking the blood. The marks don't know no different.' "

Hoately ran his eye up and down the midway, sizing up the crowd. He turned back to Stan. "Well, he does this for a week and you see to it that he gets his bottle regular. He likes this fine. This is what he thinks is heaven. So after a week you say to him like this, you say, 'Well, I got to get me a real geek. You're through.' He scares up at this because nothing scares a real rummy like the chance of a dry spell. He says, 'What's the matter? Ain't I doing okay?' So you say, 'You can't draw no crowd faking a geek. Turn in your outfit. You're through.' Then you walk away. He comes following you, begging for another chance, and you say, 'Okay. But after tonight out you go.' But you give him his bottle.

"That night you drag out the lecture and lay it on thick. All the while you're talking he's thinking about sobering up and getting the crawling shakes. You give him time to think it over, while you're talking. Then throw in the chicken. He'll geek."

"LADIES and gentlemen, you are about to witness one of the most spectacular performances of physical strength the world has ever seen. The man you are about to see has the power of an African gorilla in the body of a Greek god. Ladies and gents, Herculo, the world's most perfect man. . . .

"Right over here, folks. I now present for your edification and amusement Major Mosquito, the tiniest human being on record. Twenty inches, twenty pounds, and twenty years—and he's got plenty of big ideas for his age. Any of you girls would like to date him after the show, see me and I'll fix ya up. . . .



"Sailor Martin, the living picture gallery. Turn around, Sailor. On his back, a replica of that world-famous painting, the Rock of Ages. On his chest—turn around, Sailor—the battleship Maine blowing up in Havana Harbor. Now if any of you young fellows in the audience would like an anchor, American flag, or sweetheart's initials worked on your arm in three beautiful colors, step right up to the platform. No sissies need apply. . . .

"Over here, folks, one of the most amazing little ladies the wide world has ever known. Fifteen thousand volts of electricity pass through her body without hurting a hair of the little lady's head. Ladies and gentlemen, Mamzelle Electra. . . ."

The Great Stanton stood up and smiled, running his glance over the field of upturned faces. "Well, folks, first of all I'm going to show you how to make money. Is there anybody in the crowd who's willing to trust me with the loan of a dollar bill? You'll get it back—if you can run fast. Thanks, bud. Now then—nothing in either hand, nothing up the sleeves."

Showing his hands empty, save for the borrowed bill, Stan gave a hitch to his sleeves. In the folds of his left sleeve was a roll of bills which he acquired deftly. "Now then, one dollar—Wait a minute, bud. Are you sure you gave me only one? You're sure. But there are two—one and two. Count 'em."

He produced the bills one after another, until he had a green fan of them. He returned the bill to the lad. In doing so he turned his left side from the crowd, got a metal cup in his hand. It hung by an elastic from his left hip.

"Now then, out of nowhere they came. Let's see what happens when we roll them up. One, two, three, four, five, six. Into a roll—" He placed the bills in his left hand, slipping them into the vanisher. "Blow on the hand—" The vanisher, released, thudded softly against his hip under his coat. "Lo and behold! Gone!"

There was a scattering of applause.

"And now, folks, here's a little booklet that's worth its weight in gold, a collection of magic tricks that you can do—an hour's performance before your club, lodge, or church gathering or in your own parlor. An hour's practice—a lifetime of fun. This book formerly sold for a dollar, but for today I'm going to let you have it for two bits—a quarter of a dollar. Let's hurry it up, folks. Thank you, sir. And you. Any more? Right.

"Now then, folks, don't go 'way. I call your attention to the next platform. Madam Zeena—miracle woman of the ages. She sees, she knows, she tells you the innermost secrets of your past, your present, and your future. Madam Zeena!"

Stan jumped down from the platform and pushed through the crowd to a miniature stage draped in maroon velvet. A woman had stepped out from between the curtains. The crowd flowed over and stood looking up at her.

THE woman was tall, dressed in flowing white with astrological symbols embroidered on the hem of her robe. A cascade of brassy blond hair fell down her back and a band of gilt leather studded with glass jewels was around her forehead. Her voice was low-pitched with a hearty ring to it.

"Step right up, folks, and don't be bashful. If there's any of you that want to ask me a question Mr. Stanton is now passing among you with little cards and envelopes. Write your question on the card, and sign your initials to the card or write your name. Then give the sealed envelope to Mr. Stanton."

Stan, the envelopes in his hand, pushed through the crowd to a curtained door on one side of the little proscenium. Inside there was a flight of steps leading to the stage. Under the steps there was a window opening into the low, boxlike compartment beneath the stage. At the window a bleary, unshaven face blinked out over a clean white shirt. One hand held out a bunch of envelopes. Stan handed the man the envelopes he had collected, received the dummy batch, and in a second was onstage with them. Zeena moved forward a little table containing a metal bowl and a dark bottle.

"We'll ask the gentleman to drop all the questions into this bowl. I'm going to pour a little alcohol on your questions and drop a match into the bowl. Now you can see them burning, and that's the last of them. I've never touched them. I don't have to because I get an impression right away."

Stan had backed to one corner of the stage and stood watching the audience quietly. In the floor, which was a few inches above their eye level, was a square hole. Zeena stroked her forehead, covering her eyes with her hand. At the opening appeared a pad of paper, a grimy thumb holding it, on which was scrawled, "What to do with wagon? J. E. Giles."

Zeena looked up, folding her arms with decision. "I get an impression— It's a little cloudy still but it's getting clearer. I get the initials J . . . E . . . G. I believe it's a gentleman. Is that right? Will the person who has those initials raise his hand, please?"

An old farmer lifted a finger. "Here, ma'am."

"Ah, there you are. Thank you, Mr. *Giles*. The name *is* Giles, isn't it?"

The crowd sucked in its breath. "I thought so. Now then, Mr. Giles, you have a problem, isn't that right?" The old man's head wagged solemnly. "Let me see," Zeena went on, her hand straying to her forehead again. "I see—I see green trees and rolling land."

The old man's jaw hung open.

"Yes, green trees. Probably willow trees near a crick. And I see something under those trees. A— It's a wagon." Watching, Stan saw the old farmer nod, rapt.

"I thought so. Now you have a problem on your mind. You are thinking of some decision you have to make connected with that wagon, isn't that so? Now, Mr. Giles, I would like to give you a piece of advice: don't sell that old blue-bodied wagon."

The old man shook his head sternly. "No, ma'am, I won't. Don't belong to me!"

There was a snicker in the crowd. One man laughed out loud. Zeena rallied, "Just what I wanted to find out. But let me ask you just one question, Mr. Giles. Is there anything the matter with that wagon?"

"Spring's broke under the seat," he muttered.

"Well, I get an impression that you are wondering whether to get that spring fixed before you return the wagon or whether to return it with the spring broken and say nothing about it. Is that it?"

"That's it, ma'am!" The old farmer looked around him triumphantly. He was vindicated.

"Well, I'd be inclined to talk it over with the man you borrowed it from and find out if the spring was weak when he loaned it to you."

Stan left the stage and crept down the steps behind the draperies. He squeezed under the steps and came out beneath the stage. It was hot, and the reek of whisky made the air sweetly sick.

Pete sat at a card table under the stage trap. Before him were envelopes Stan had passed him on his way up to the seeress; he was snipping the ends off with scissors.

Above them Zeena had wound up the "readings" and gone into her pitch: "Now then, folks, I have here a set of astrological readings, all worked out for each and every one of you. Let me know your date of birth and you get a forecast of future events complete with character reading, lucky numbers, lucky days of the week, and the phases of the moon most conducive to your prosperity and success. They're only a quarter, first come, first served."

Stan slipped out of the sweatbox and into the main tent, then sauntered over toward the soft drink stand.

Magic is all right, but if only I knew human nature like Zeena. She has the kind of magic that ought to take anybody right to the top. It's a convincer—that act of hers. Yet nobody can do it, cold. It takes years to get that kind of smooth talk, and she's never stumped. I'll have to try and pump her and get wised up. She's a smart dame, all right. Too bad she's tied to a rumdum like Pete. She isn't bad-looking, even if she is a little old.

Wait a minute, wait a minute. Maybe here's where we start to climb. . . .

BEYOND the flowing windshield the taillight of the truck ahead wavered ruby-red in the darkness. The windshield wiper's tock-tock-tock was hypnotic. Sitting between the two women, Stan remembered the attic at home on a rainy day—private, shut off from prying eyes, close, steamy, intimate.

Molly Cahill, the show's Mamzelle Electra, sat on his right. In the driver's seat Zeena bent forward, following blindly the truck that held the gear for the geek show, the strongman's weights, and Martin's tattoo outfit.

"Well, here we are, chillun," Zeena said.

The rain had slackened to a drizzle. In the lights of headlamps the roughnecks were busy tearing canvas from the trucks. Stan threw his slicker over his shoulders, went around to open the rear doors of the truck. "Pete, wake up. We're here. We've got to put up."

Pete sat up shivering. "Just a minute, kid." From one pocket he drew a bottle, offering it to Stan, who shook his head. Pete took a pull, then another.

The floodlights were up and the carny boss had laid out the midway with his marking stakes. Stan shouldered planks that fitted together to make Zeena's stage and drew one bundle of them from the van.

In the growing lavender of daybreak the carny took shape. Booths sprang up, the cookhouse sent the perfume of coffee along the dripping air.

Inside the Ten-in-One tent Stan and Pete set up the stage for the mental act and stowed away the cartons of horoscopes.

Zeena returned. "Got me a whole bridal suite in town—two rooms and bawth. C'mon over, both of you, and have a good soak."

"I'd like to, sugar," Pete said. "Only I got to do a few little chores first in town. See you later on."

"It's 28 Locust Lane."

Pete started off across the lot toward a shack at the edge of the village. Zeena watched him go.

"I'll bet that joint is a blind pig," she said to Stan. "Pete's sure a real clairvoyant when it comes to locating hidden treasure—long as it gurgles when you shake it. Well, you coming back and clean up?"

The sun, breaking through, sparkled in wagon ruts still deep with rain. Stan took her arm to help her across the puddles.

"You're awful nice to have around, Stan. You know that?"

He stopped walking. They were out of sight of the carnival grounds. Zeena was smiling. Awkwardly his arm went around her and he kissed her. It was lots different from kissing high-school girls. The warm, intimate searching of her mouth left him weak and dizzy. They broke apart and Stan said, "Wow." They walked on, hand in hand.

"Where's Molly?" he asked after a while.

"Pounding her ear. The kid had her a good soak and hit the hay. She's a fine kid, if she could only grow up some and stop yelping for that race-track daddy of hers every time she has a hangnail."

In the room Zeena threw off her raincoat. She pulled off her shoes and stretched out on the bed, reaching her arms wide. Then she drew out her hairpins and let the brassy hair flow around her on the pillow.

Stan said, "I guess I'd better get that bath." He hung his coat on a chairback. When he looked up he saw that Zeena had her eyes on him. Her lids were partly closed. One arm was bent under her head and she was smiling, a sweet, possessive smile.

He came and sat beside her on the edge of the bed. Zeena covered his hand with hers and suddenly he bent and kissed her. This time there was no need for them to stop and they didn't.

THE carnival crawled from town to town, the outline of the sky's edge around the fair grounds changing but the sea of upturned faces always the same.

The first season is always the best and the worst for a carny. Stan's muscles hardened and his fingers developed great surety, his voice greater volume. He put a couple of coin sleights in the act that he would never have had the nerve to try in public before.

Zeena taught him many things, some of them about magic. "Personally," she told him, "I've always stuck to the mental business. Folks are always crazy to have their fortunes told, and what the hell —You cheer 'em up, give 'em something to wish and hope for. That's all the preacher does every Sunday. Not much different, being a fortune teller and a preacher, way I look at it."

Evansburg, Morristown, Cooley Mills, Ocheketawney, Bale City, Boeotia, Sanders Falls, Newbridge.

Stan was surprised, and gnawed by frustration. Zeena was the wise one, who knew all the ropes. And yet, in the tight world of the carnival, she could find very few opportunities to be alone with Stan. Pete was always there, always hanging around, apologetic, crestfallen, hands trembling, perfumed with bootleg.

Stan waited until closing one night. He stepped back of the curtains on her stage. Zeena had taken off the white robe and was putting her hair up, her shoulders white and round and tantalizing over her slip. He took her roughly in his arms and kissed her and she pushed him away. "You beat it out of here. I got to get dressed."

"All right. You mean we're washed up?" he said.

Her face softened. "Got to learn to call your shots, honey. We ain't married folks. We got to be careful. Only one person I'm married to and that's Pete. You're a sweet boy and I'm fond as all hell of you. Maybe a little too fond of you. But we got to have some sense. Now you be good. We'll get together one of these days—or nights."

She slid her cool arms around his neck and gave him the promise between his lips, warm, sweet, and searching. His heart began to pound.

"Tonight?"

She shook her head. "I got to make Pete write some letters. He can't if he gets too loaded and he's got some that need answering. Maybe tomorrow night."

Stan turned away, rebellious and savage. He hated Zeena and her Pete.

On his way to the cookhouse for his supper he passed Pete. Pete was sober and shaky and profane. Zeena would have hidden his bottle in view of the letter-writing session.

"Got a spare dollar on you, kid?" Pete whispered.

Zeena came up behind them. "You two boys stay right here and have your supper," she said. "I've got to find a drugstore. Nothing like a girl's being careful of her beauty, huh? I'll be right back, honey," she said to Pete. "We got to catch up on our correspondence."

STAN ate quickly, then put up his cot and watched the Ten-in-One settle down for the night. Under the astrology stage a single light burned. Inside Pete was sitting at the table, trying to read the *Billboard*.

Zeena had slipped the bottle under the seat of Major Mosquito's chair. Stan crossed the tent softly. His hand found the bottle, drew it out.

There was only an inch or two left in it. Stan turned back and crept up the steps of Zeena's theater. A few moments later he came down and squeezed into the understage compartment. The bottle, more than half full now, was in his hand.

"How about a drink, Pete?"

"Glory be!" The flask was nearly snatched from his hand. Pete jerked the cork. He drained it and handed it back. "God almighty. A friend in need, as the saying goes. I'm afraid I didn't leave much for you, Stan."

"That's all right. I don't care for any right now."

Pete seemed to pull himself together. "You're a good kid, Stan. You got a fine act. Don't let anything ever keep you out of the big time. You can go places if you don't get bogged down. You should have seen Zeena and me when we were on top. Used to pack 'em in.

"But you— You got a good front—you're a damn good-looking kid. You can talk. You got everything. Great magician some day. Only don't . . ." His eyes were glazing over. He stopped speaking and sat rigid.

"Why don't you turn out the light and take it easy until Zeena gets back?" Stan suggested.

A grunt was his only answer. Then the man stood up and threw back his shoulders. "Kid, you should have seen us when we played the Keith time!"

Good God, is this idiot never going to pass out, Stan thought.

"You know, kid—" Pete dropped his arm. His shoulders sagged. He crumpled into the folding chair, resting his elbows on the card table. When he raised his face to Stan the eyes were glazed, the mouth slack.

His head fell forward on his forearms. "Just old drunk. Just lush. Lord . . . Zeena be mad. Don't you let on, son you gimme that little drink. She be mad at you, too." He began to cry softly.

Stan felt his stomach heave with disgust. He turned without a word and left the steaming compartment.

It seemed as if half the night had worn away before Zeena did come back. Stan met her.

"Where's Pete?"

"Passed out."

"Where'd he get it?"

"I—I don't know. He was over by the geek's layout."

"Damn it, Stan, I told you to watch him. Oh, well, I'm tuckered out myself. Might as well let him sleep it off. Tomorrow's another day."

"Zeena, let me walk you home."

They had left the tent and the darkened midway stretched out ahead of them. There was a leaden feeling in Stan's chest and he fought to throw it off. He laced his fingers in hers and she did not draw her hand away.

STAN reached the Ten-in-One tent just before light. He crept into his bunk and was out like a shot. Then something was chirping in his ear and tugging at his shoulder. "Kid, wake up! Wake up, you big lump!"

Stan growled and opened his eyes. The pestiferous force at his shoulder was Major Mosquito, the midget.

"Stan, get up! Pete's dead!"

"What?" Stan shot off the bunk and felt for his shoes. "What happened to him?"

"Just croaked—the stinking old rum-pot. Got into that bottle of wood alcohol Zeena keeps to burn the phoney questions. Come on, take a look."

Without speaking, Stan laced up his shoes. He kept fighting back the thought that wouldn't stay out of his mind. Then it broke over him like a thunder storm: They'll hang me. They'll hang me. They'll hang me. Only I didn't mean it. I only wanted to pass him out. I didn't know it was wood— They'll hang me. They'll—

He pressed through the knot of show people around the seeress's stage. Zeena stepped out and stood facing them, tall and straight and dry-eyed.

"He's gone all right. He was a good guy and a swell trouper. I told him that alky was bad. Only last night I hid his bottle on him—" She stopped and suddenly ducked back through the curtains.

Stan turned and pushed through the crowd. He walked out of the tent and on to the edge of the grounds.

His foot clinked against something bright and he picked up a burned-out electric bulb. He kept it in his hand, looking for a rock or a fence post. His diaphragm seemed to be pressing up around his lungs and keeping him from drawing his breath.

On a telephone pole was a streaked election poster, carrying the gaunt face of the candidate.

Stan drew back his arm and let the bulb fly. Slowly, as if by the very intensity of his attention he had slowed down time itself, the bulb struck the printed face and shattered.

As if an abscess inside him had broken, Stan could breathe again and the knot of fear loosened. He could never fear again with the same agony. He knew it. His mind, clear as the bright night air around him, took over, and he began to think.

"NOW Mamzelle Electra will perform a feat never attempted before. Holding the two filaments of a carbon arc light, she will allow the death-dealing current to pass through her body. . . ."

Stan quietly slipped into the compartment below the stage of Zeena, the Woman Who Knows. It no longer smelled of whisky.

The rustle of feet surging around the stage outside, then Zeena's voice in her opening spiel. Stan took a bundle of dummy questions—blank cards in small envelopes—and stood by the window where Hoately would pass behind the curtains.

They parted at the side of the stage; Hoately's hand appeared. Quickly Stan took the collected questions and placed the dummy batch in the hand which vanished upward. He sat down at the table, squared up the pack of envelopes and cut the ends from them. Moving quickly, he arranged the cards before him.

Question: "Where is my son?" Handwriting old-fashioned. Woman over sixty, he judged. A good one to open with—the signature was clear and spelled out in full—Mrs. Anna Briggs Sharpley. Stan reached for the pad, wrote, "Where son?" printed the name swiftly, and held the pad up to hole in the stage at Zeena's feet.

"I get the impression of the initial *S*. Is there a Mrs. Sharpley?. . . You think of your boy as still a little fellow, the way you knew him when he used to come asking you for a piece of bread with sugar on it. . . ."

Where the hell did Zeena get all that stuff from? She was no more telepathic than that kid, Molly, was electricity proof. The Electric Chair act was gaffed like everything in the carny. But Zeena—

"My dear lady, you must remember that he's a man grown now and probably has children of his own to worry about. You want him to write to you. Isn't that so?"

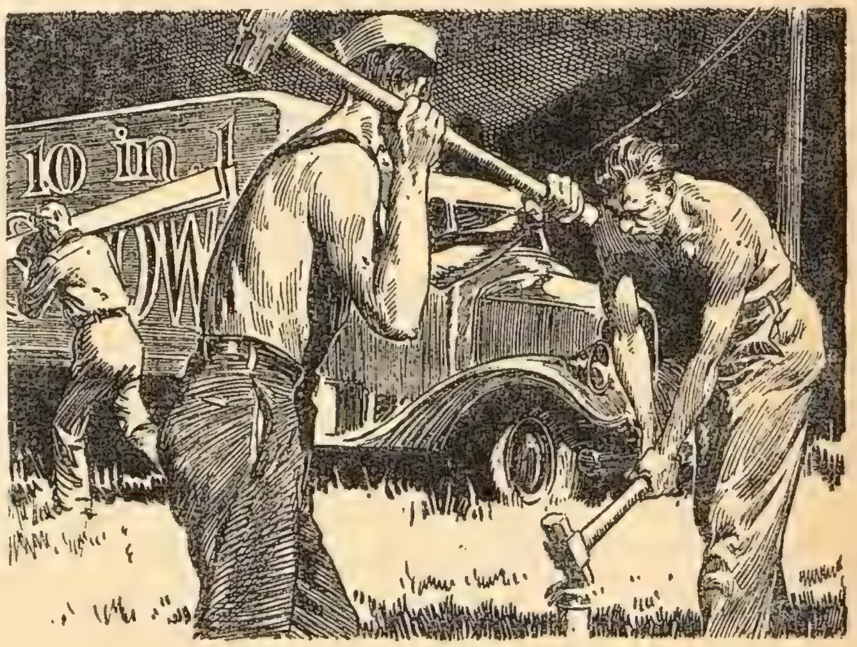
It was uncanny how Zeena could fish out things just by watching the person's face. How do you get to know so much that you can tell people what they are thinking about just by looking at them? Maybe you had to be born with the gift.

Suddenly the thought struck Stan that it was not genius after all. Zeena knew people. But people were a lot alike. What you told one you could tell nine out of ten. Good God, Zeena is working for peanuts! Somewhere in this racket there is a gold mine!

WHEN Stan woke up it was still dark. Zeena was crying. Stan turned over and slid his arm around her. "What's the matter, baby?"

Zeena turned heavily. "Just got to thinking about Pete. You know, today I was going through some of his stuff. His old press books and letters. And I found the notebook he used to keep. The one he had our code in. Pete invented that code himself and we were the only people that ever knew it."

Stan said nothing but turned her face up and began kissing her. He was fully awake now. Finally he said, "What are we going to do about your act?"



Her voice was suddenly crisp. "What about the act?"

"I thought maybe you were thinking of changing it."

"What for? Ain't we taking in more on the pitch than ever?"

"But I mean, couldn't we work a code act? You could still do it, couldn't you?"

She chuckled. "I can do it in my sleep. But it takes a hell of a lot of work to get all them lists and things learned. And the season's more than half over."

"I could learn it."

She thought for a while and then said, "It's all right with me, honey. It's all down in Pete's book."

"You have it here?"

"Wait a minute. Where's the fire? Sure I've got it here. You'll see it."

Silence. At last Stan sat up and swung his feet to the floor. "I better get back to that pantry they rented me for a room." He snapped on the light.

Zeena yawned cavernously. "Guess you're right, kiddo. See you in the morning."

"Zeena, that notebook— Could I see it?"

She got up, rummaged in the bag and drew out a canvas-covered book marked "Ledger." Stan tucked it under his arm and switched off the light.

In his own room, he threw himself down on the bed. Impatiently he paged through the book. On the last page was a heading: "Common Questions." Beneath it was a list with figures:

"Is my husband true to me? 56, 29, 18, 42.

"Will mother get well? 18, 3, 7, 12.

"Who poisoned our dog? 352, 3, 0, 3." Beside this was the notation, "A steady item. Every audience."

The figures, then, were a record of the number of similar questions collected from the same audience.

"There is a recurring pattern followed by the questions asked. For every unusual question there will be fifty that you have had before. Human nature is the same everywhere. All have the same troubles. Can control anybody by finding out what he's afraid of. Health, Wealth, Love. And Travel and Success. They're all afraid of ill health, of poverty, of boredom, of failure. Fear is the key to human nature. They're afraid. . . ."

Stan looked past the pages. The geek was made by fear. He was afraid of sobering up and getting the horrors. But what made him a drunk? Fear. Find out what they are afraid of and sell it back to them. That's the key!

"Idea: combine question-answering act with code act. Make list of questions, hook up with code numbers. Answer vague at first, working toward definite, if can see face of spectator and tell when hitting."

On the following pages was a neatly numbered list of questions. There were exactly a hundred. Number One was "Is my husband true to me?" Number Two was "Will I get a job soon?"

The sun slid up, the sound of wagon tires on concrete told of the awakening city. At ten o'clock there was a tap on the door. Stan shook himself. "Yes?"

"Wake up, sleepy head. Rise and shine."

He unlocked the door and let Zeena in.

"What you got the light on for?" She saw the book. "Lord's sake, kid, ain't you been to bed at all?"

Stan rubbed his eyes and stood up. "Ask me a number. Any number up to a hundred."

"Fifty-five."

"Will my mother-in-law always live with us?"

Zeena ran her fingers through his hair. "You know what I think, kid? I think you're a mind reader."

MIDDLE evening and a good crowd. Beyond the canvas and the gaudy banners Hoately's voice was raspy. "Hi, look! Hi, look! Hi, look! Right this way for the monster aggregation of freaks, marvels, and curiosities. Featuring Mamzelle Electra, the little lady who defies the lightning."

Stan looked across at Molly Cahill. When she held the sputtering arc points together she always flinched; the last day or two, whenever he saw it, a little thrill leaped up his spine.

It's funny how you can see a girl every day for months and yet not see her, Stan thought. Then something will happen—like the way Molly's mouth presses together when she holds the arc points and the fire starts to fly. Then you see her all different.

Molly was sitting demurely in a bentwood chair beside the heavy, square electric chair with its coiled wires, its straps and its chilling suggestion of death which was as phoney as everything else in the carny. She was studying a green racing form. Absorbed, she reached down and scratched one ankle and Stan felt the ripple go up his back again.

". . . On this platform we have a little lady who is one of the marvels and mysteries of the age—Mamzelle Electra!"

A whistle sounded from the entrance. Stan's head spun toward it. A big, white-haired man with a badge pinned to his denim shirt stood there, his thumbs hooked in his belt. A holster containing a revolver hung from a looser belt on a slant. Hoately grinned down at the marks below Molly's platform. "That will conclude our performance for the time being, folks."

Hoately approached the law. "What can I do for you, Chief? I'm owner of this attraction. You're welcome to inspect every inch of it. We've got no girl shows and no games of skill or chance."

"I got orders from the marshal to close down the show. And arrest anybody I see fit. I'm arresting you and—" He slid his eyes over the assembled performers. Molly was sitting in the Electric Chair, the sequins of her skimpy bodice winking as her breasts rose and fell. She was smiling tautly. "And I'm taking that woman there—indecent exposure. We got decent women in this town. And we got daughters; growin' girls. All right, you two, come along. Put a coat on that girl first."

Hoately cleared his throat. "Looky here, Chief, that girl's got to wear a costume like that on account of she handles electric wires and ordinary cloth might catch fire and . . ."

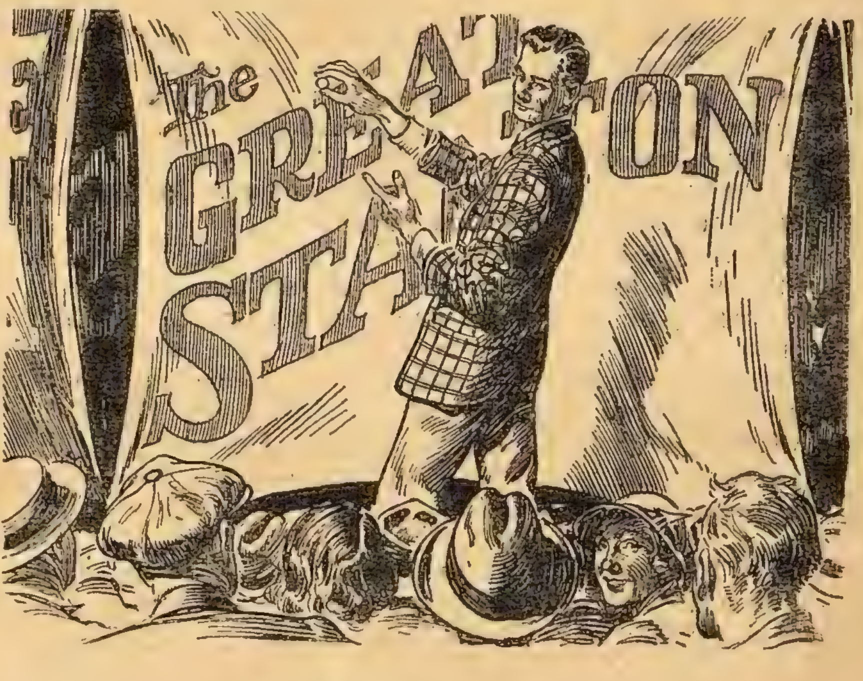
The deputy gripped Hoately by the shirt. "Shut up. I'm a church deacon and I aim to keep this a clean town if I have to run every Jezebel out of it on a fence rail."

His tiny eyes were fastened on Molly's bare thighs. He raised his glance ever so slightly to take in her shoulders and breasts. Beside the Electric Girl's platform he noticed a neat young man with corn-yellow hair saying something to the girl who nodded.

The law lumbered over, dragging Hoately with him. "Young lady, git off that contraption." He reached up a red-knuckled hand toward Molly. Stan was on the other side of the platform feeling for the switch. There was an ominous buzzing and crackling: Molly's black hair stood straight up like a halo around her head. She brought her finger tips together. Blue fire flowed between them. The deputy stopped, stony. The girl reached out, and sparks jumped from her fingers to the deputy's. With a shout he drew back. The buzz of the static generator stopped and a voice drew his attention; it was the blond youth.

"You can see the reason, Marshal, for the metal costume the young lady is forced to wear. The electricity would ignite any ordinary fabric and only by wearing the briefest of covering can she avoid bursting into flame. Thousands of volts of electricity cover her body like a sheath. Pardon me, Marshal, but there seem to be several dollar bills coming out of your pocket."

In spite of himself, the deputy followed Stan's pointing finger. He saw nothing. Stan reached out and one after another five folded dollar bills appeared from the pocket of the denim shirt. He pressed them into the old man's hand. "Another minute and you'd have lost your money, Marshal."



The deputy's eyes were half shut with hostile suspicion; but he shoved the cash into his pocket.

Stan went on, "And I see that you have bought your wife a little present of a few silk handkerchiefs." From the cartridge belt Stan slowly drew out a bright green silk, then another of purple. "I'm sure your wife will like these. And here's a pure white one—for your daughter. She's about nineteen now, isn't she, Marshal?"

"How'd you know I got a daughter?"

Stan rolled the silks into a ball and they vanished. His face was serious. "I know many things, Marshal. I don't know exactly how, but there's nothing supernatural about it, I am sure. My family was Scotch and the Scotch are often gifted with powers that the old folks used to call 'second sight.' "

The white head nodded involuntarily.

"Now this isn't any of my business, Marshal, because I know you are a capable man. But my Scotch blood tells me that there is one thing in your life that is worrying you. Because all your strength and your courage and your authority in the town seem to be of no avail. I sense that there are antagonistic influences surrounding you. Someone near to you is jealous of you and your ability. And while part of this extends to your duties in upholding the law, there is another part of it that has to do with your church . . ."

The face had changed. The savage lines had ironed out and now it was simply the face of an old man, weary and bewildered.

Stan's voice grew intimate. "There is a woman you love very dearly. Yet there is an obstacle in the way of your love. You feel hemmed-in and trapped by it. But I feel that all will come out well for you. Because you have strength. And you'll get more. The Lord will give you strength. And there are malicious tongues about you, ready to do you an injury. And to do this fine woman an injury if they can. . . ."

Stan bore down: "And while I feel the spirit talking to me, I must tell you that there's a surprise for you—about this time next year or a little later, say around November. Something you've had your heart set on for a long time but it will come true if you follow the hunches you get and don't let anybody talk you out of obeying your own good judgment which has never let you down yet—whenever you've given it a free rein."

Hoately and the rest had evaporated. Stan turned and began to move slowly toward the gate. The entire carny had been sloughed and the deputies had chased the townies off the lot.

The deputy let out a long, whistling breath, hooked his thumbs in his belt, and stood looking out on the darkening midway.

Then he turned back to Stan and his voice was just an ordinary old man's voice. "Young fella, I wisht I'd met you a long time ago. Tell the others to go easy in this town because we aim to keep it clean. But, by God, when —if I'm ever elected marshal you ain't got nothing to worry about, as long as you have a good, clean show. Good night, son."

He plodded away slowly, his shoulders squared against the dark.

Stan's collar was tight with the blood pounding beneath it. His head was as light as if he had a fever.

The world is mine, damn it! The world is mine! I've got 'em across the barrel and I can shake them loose from whatever I want. The geek has his whisky. The rest of them drink something else; they drink promises. They drink hope. And I've got it to hand them. I'm running over with it. I can get anything I want. If I could hand this old guy a cold reading and get away with it, I could do it to a senator! I could do it to a governor!

IN the space where the trucks were parked, Zeena's van was behind the others. Stan opened the cab door and crept in, his blood hammering. "Molly!"

"Yes, Stan." The whisper came from the black cavern behind the seat.

"It's okay, kid. I stalled him. He's gone."

"Oh, Stan, gee, you're great. You're great."

Stan crawled back over the seat and his hand touched a soft, hot shoulder. It was trembling. His arm went about it. "Molly!"

Lips found his. He crushed her to him.

"Stan, you won't let anything happen to me—will you?"

"Certainly not. Nothing's ever going to happen to you while I'm around."

"Oh, Stan, you're so much like my dad."

In his mind Stan saw the blaze of the foots, with himself standing there straight. In command. Molly was in the audience in an evening gown, walking down the aisle. The marks—the audience—craned their necks to look at her. She was an eyeful. The placards at each side of the stage said simply, STANTON. The big time.

"Molly, you like show business, don't you?"

"Why, sure, Stan. Daddy always wanted to see me in show business."

"Well, what I mean is— Well, let's head for the big time. Together."

Her arm was around his waist. "Darling, that's wonderful. I was hoping you'd say that to me."

"I mean it. Together we can get right to the top. You've got the class and the shape. I mean, you're beautiful and we can work up a two-person code act that'll knock 'em dead."

Molly's arm tightened around him. "Stan, that's what I always wanted. Daddy would be awful proud of us. He'd be crazy about you, Stan. The way you can talk your way out of a tight place."

WHO poisoned our dog? People around you who envy you. Number fourteen. One: Will. Four: Tell. *Will* you *tell* this lady what she is thinking about?

. . . I can see, madam, that there are many persons surrounding you who are envious of your happiness, your culture, your good fortune and—yes, I must be frank—your good looks. I would advise you to go your own way, doing those things which you know down deep in your heart of hearts are right. There is no weapon you can use against malicious envy except the confidence in your way of life as the righteous one, no matter what the envious say. And it is one of these, madam, and I believe you know of whom I am speaking, who has poisoned your dog."

The applause was slow in starting. They were baffled; they were awe-struck. Then it began from the back of the theater and traveled forward, the people whose questions had been whispered to Molly and whose questions he had answered, clapping last. It was a storm of sound. And Stan, hearing it through the heavy drop curtain, breathed it in like mountain air.

The curtains parted for his second bow. He took it, bowing slowly from the waist, and then he extended his hand and Molly swept from the wings. They bowed together, hand in hand, and the curtains cut down again.

Stan opened the dressing-room door, stood aside for Molly to go in, then followed and shut the door. He sat for a moment on the wicker couch, then whipped off his white tie and unbuttoned the neckband of his stiff shirt and lit a cigarette.

Molly had stepped out of the skin-tight evening gown she wore and hung it on a hanger. She slipped on a robe, caught up her hair in a knot and began to dab cold cream on her face.

Finally Stan spoke. "Molly, I tell you, there's not a bit of difference between spiritualism and this mentalism act we've been doing for five years."

"Honey, I don't like it."

"What's the matter with it?"

"Well, what if there are—what if people do come back? I mean, well, they mightn't like it. I can't explain it. I'm scared."

"Listen, baby. I been over this a hundred times. If anybody's going to come back they're not going to get steamed up because we fake a little. We'll be doing the marks a favor; we'll make 'em plenty happy. After all, suppose you thought you could really speak to your dad, now. Wouldn't that make you happy?"

"Oh, God, I wish I could. Maybe it's because I've wished so hard for just that and hoped that someday I could."

"I know, kid. I know how it is. Maybe there's something in it after all. I don't know. But I've met half a dozen spook workers in the past year and they're hustlers, every one of them. I tell you, it's just show business. The crowd believes we can read minds. All right. They believe it when I tell them that 'the lawsuit's going to come out okay.' Isn't it better to give them something to hope for? What does a regular preacher do every Sunday? Only all he does is promise. We'll do more than promise. We'll give 'em proof!"

"I—honey, I just can't."

"But you don't have to *do* anything! I'll handle all the effects. All you have to do is get into a cabinet and go to sleep if you want to. Leave everything else to me. Give us a few years in this dodge and just one big job and then we can knock off. Settle down. We'll—we'll get married. Have a house. We'll—have a kid."

"Don't fib, honey."

"I mean it. Don't you think I want a kid? But it takes dough. A wad of dough. That's the kind of life I want and I've got my angles worked out, every one of them. Got my ordination certificate today. Baby, you're looking at a full-blown preacher. Last week I had a tailor make me an outfit—black broadcloth. I got a turn-around collar and everything. I tell you, it's a perfect set-up. And all *you* have to do is sit there with the old ladies admiring you and thanking you afterward for all the comfort you've brought 'em. But if you are yellow I can do it alone. You can go back to the carny and find yourself another kooch show and start all over."

"No. honey, I didn't mean—"

"Well, I do mean. I mean just that. One way is the big dough and plenty of class and a kid and clothes that will make you look like a million bucks. The other way is the carny, doing bumps and grinds for a bunch of rubes for a few more years. And then what? You know what. Make up your mind."

"Just let me think about it."

"Look, baby, I love you. You know that. No, don't pull away. I said I love you. Put your other arm around me. There. This is heaven, kid. Don't break it up."

"Oh, honey, honey, honey."

"That's better. And you will do it? Say yes, baby."

"Yes. Yes—I'll do anything."

IN the old gray stone house near Riverside Drive, Addie Peabody (Mrs. Charles W.) answered the door herself. She had given Pearl the evening off and Pearl had gone willingly enough, in view of what was coming.

The first to arrive were Mr. and Mrs. Simmons. In twos and threes the rest of the company gathered and then the bell rang a steady, insistent note, full of command. Mrs. Peabody hurried out, taking a quick look in the hall mirror and straightening her girdle before she opened the door. Outside, the light above the door fell on the heads of two people, the first a tall, dramatic-looking woman in her late twenties. But Mrs. Peabody's glance slid over her and came to rest on the man.

The Rev. Stanton Carlisle was about thirty-five. He was holding his black hat and the lamplight made his hair glisten golden—just like the sun, she thought. He made her think of Apollo.

"Oh, Mr. Carlisle, I just knew it was you. I got a distinct impression the minute you rang the bell."

"I am sure we shall establish an excellent vibrational harmony, Mrs. Peabody. May I present our medium, Mary Margaret Cahill."

In the living room all the lights were extinguished, save for a single oil lamp with a shade of ruby-red glass which the clergyman had brought with him. It had just enough light for each person to see the faces of the others.

The Rev. Carlisle led the medium, who now wore a robe of white watered silk, to an armchair in a niche. The group formed a circle, waiting patiently, devoutly. Molly's eyes were closed. She moaned and slumped lower in the chair. A low whisper came from deep within her, and she twisted and began to breathe heavily.

The Rev. Carlisle sat upright, eyes closed, his hands motionless on his knees. In the dim red glow of the lamp his face seemed to hang in mid-air; his hands to float as motionless as if they were made of papier-maché. Save for the indistinct circle of faces the only other thing visible in the room was the medium in her white robe.

Slowly and gently spirit sounds began. Gentle raps, then louder knocks. Something set the glass prisms of the chandelier tinkling, and their musical voices continued for several minutes.

Mrs. Simmons spoke first, in a hushed, awed voice. "I see a light."

It was there. A soft, greenish spark hovered near the floor beside Mrs. Peabody and then vanished. Mrs. Peabody felt a breeze. Then, moving high in the air across the room, was another light. She tilted her eyeglasses a trifle to bring it into sharper focus. It was a hand with the forefinger raised as if toward heaven. It vanished.

Now, floating near the floor, in front of the medium, was a glowing mass which seemed to unwind from nowhere. It took form and rose before her and for a moment obscured her face.

It grew brighter and Mrs. Peabody made out the features of a young girl. "Caroline! *Carol*, darling—is it you?"

The whisper was gentle and caressing. "Mother. Mother. Mother."

It was gone. Mrs. Peabody took off her glasses and wiped her eyes. At last Caroline had come through to her. The perfect image of the child! They seem to stay the age when they pass over. That would make Caroline still sixteen, bless her heart. "Carol—don't leave! Don't go, darling! Come back!"

Darkness. The oil lamp sputtered, the flame died down, pitch black enfolded them. But Mrs. Peabody did not notice it. Her eyes were tight shut against the tears.

The Rev. Carlisle spoke. "Will someone turn on the lights?"

Orange glow leaped out brilliantly, showing the reverend still sitting with his hands on his knees. He rose now and went to the medium; with a handkerchief he wiped the corners of her eyes and her lips. She opened her eyes got to her feet swaying.

The spiritualist steadied her arm. "Let me go upstairs," she said breathlessly.

When she was gone they crowded around the Rev. Stanton Carlisle, pressing his hand and all talking at once from the release of the tension.

"My dear friends, this is not our last evening. I see many more in the future. We shall indeed explore the Other Side together. Now I must go as soon as Miss Cahill is ready. I will go up to her now and ask all of you to remain here and not to say good-bye. She has been under tremendous strain. Let us leave quietly."

He smiled his blessing on them and closed the door softly behind him. On the hall table was a blue envelope, "To our dear medium as a token of our appreciation." Inside was Mrs. Peabody's check for seventy dollars.

"Ten bucks apiece," Stan said under his breath and crushed the envelope in his fingers. "Hang on to your hat, lady; you ain't seen nothing yet."

Upstairs he entered Mrs. Peabody's room and shut the door. Molly had put on her street clothes.

"Well, kid, we laid 'em in the aisles. And with the light on every minute and the medium visible. The robe business was terrific. What misdirection! They couldn't have pried their eyes away even if they'd known what I was doing."

From under his clerical vest he drew two papier-mâché hands and two black mittens. From a large pocket inside his coat came a piece of black cardboard on which was pasted a picture of a movie actress cut from a magazine cover and touched up with luminous paint. From his sleeve he took a telescopic reaching-rod made of blue steel. Bundling all the props into the white robe he stuffed them into a valise. Then he lifted his shoe, pulled a luminous-headed thumbtack from the instep, tossed it in, and shut the bag.

"All set, kid? You better endorse this. It's only seventy skins, but we're just starting. Baby, next time we really turn the heat on the old gal."

Molly's lip was trembling. "Stan, Mrs. Peabody's awful sweet. I—I can't go on with this. I just can't. She wants to speak to her daughter so bad and all you could do was whisper at her a little."

The Rev. Stanton Carlisle was an ordained spiritualist minister. He was entitled to perform marriages, conduct services, and bury the dead. He threw back his head and laughed silently. "Don't worry, kid. She'll hear from her daughter. And in something louder than a whisper. And she'll see her too. The next time we work with this bunch we'll work in a regular séance or a curtain over the cabinet. And do you know who's going to give Mrs. Peabody the big thrill of talking to her daughter? Guess."

"No. Not me, Stan. I couldn't."

He was suddenly steely. "You don't want me to let on to all those nice old folks down there that I have been deceived by a fraudulent medium, do you, sugar? You've got 'em eating out of your hand. And when the time comes—you're going to be one ghost that talks. Come on, kid. Let's beat it out of here. You think you're the only one in this show that ever gets the shakes?"

THE old gray stone house was silent. Mr. Carlisle had extinguished the lights in the living room and drawn the curtain before the cabinet. Addie Peabody took her place in the chair beside him and he turned out the last light and let the dark flow around them.

Addie started when she heard the trumpet clink as it was levitated. Then from a great distance came a shrill, sweet piping—like a shepherd playing on reeds.

A cool breeze fanned her face and then a touch of something material stroked her hair. From the dark, where she knew the cabinet to be, came a speck of greenish light. It trembled and leaped, growing in size until it stopped and unfolded like an opening flower. Then it grew larger and took shape, seeming to draw a veil from before its face.

It was Caroline, standing in the air a few inches above the floor.

The green light that was her face grew brighter until Addie could see her eyebrows, her mouth and her eyelids. The eyes opened; their dark, cavernous blankness wrenched her heart.

"Caroline, speak to me. Are you all right, baby?"

"Mother . . . I . . . must confess something."

"Darling, there isn't anything to confess. Sometimes I did scold you, but I didn't mean it. Please forgive me."

"No . . . I must confess. I am not . . . not altogether liberated. I had selfish thoughts. I had mean thoughts. About you. About other people. They keep me on a low plane . . . where the lower influences can reach me and make trouble for me. Mother . . . help me."

"Caroline, baby! Anything—tell me what to do!"

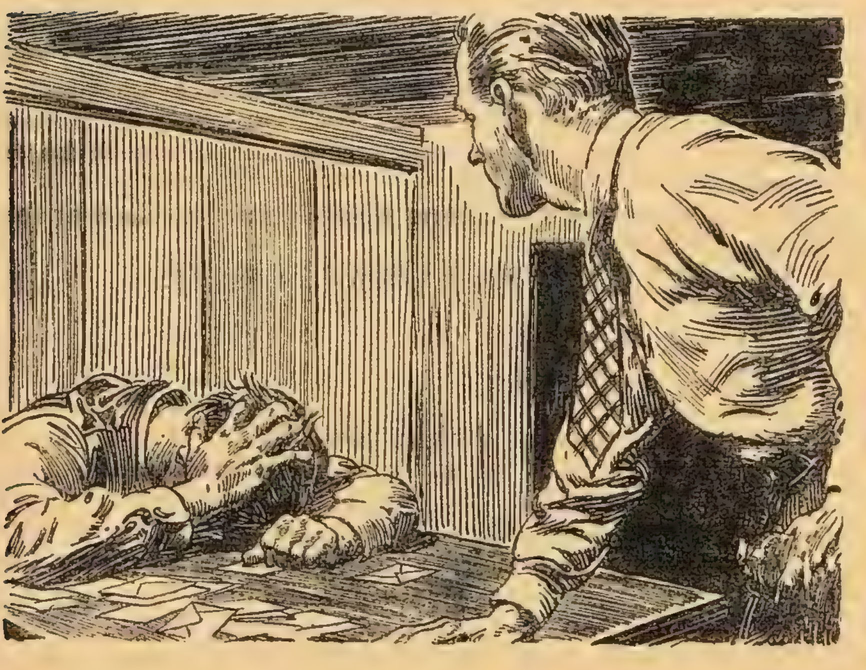
"This house . . . evil things have entered it. They have taken it away from us. Take me away."

"Darling—but how?"

"Go far away. Go where it is warm. To California."

"Yes. Yes, darling. Tell Mother."

"This house . . . ask Mr. Carlisle to take it for his church. Let us never live here any more. Take me to California. For if you go I will come to you there. And we will be happy. Only when this house is a church can I be happy. Please, Mother."



"Oh, baby, of course. Anything. Why didn't you ask me before?"

The form was growing dim. It sank, wavering, and the light went out.

SUN beat on the awnings while six floors below them the streets wriggled in the rising heat from the pavement. Molly came out of the kitchenette with three cans of cold beer and Major Mosquito, sitting on the sofa, reached up for the beer and smiled.

Zeena filled an armchair beside the window, fanning herself gently with a copy of *Variety*. "Whew! Ain't it a scorcher? You know, this is the first summer I've ever been in New York . I don't envy you all here. Say, Molly"—she finished the last swallow of beer—"why don't you come out with us and finish the season? You say Stan is working this new act of his solo."

Molly sat down next to the Major. She lit a cigarette, the match shaking a little. "Stan's awfully busy at the church. The folks are crazy about him. He gives reading services every night. Then he has development classes every afternoon. I—I just take it easy."

She looked at the clock on the mantel. Then she switched on the radio. As the tubes warmed, the familiar voice came through clearer.

". . . we at the Church of the Heavenly Message rest content and secure in our faith. And it is with the deepest gratitude that I thank them, the splendid men and women of our congregation, for their generosity, which has enabled me to bring you this Sunday afternoon message for so many weeks.

"Some persons think of the 'new religion of Spiritualism' as a closed sect. They ask me, 'Can I believe in the power of our dear ones to return and still not be untrue to the faith of my fathers?' My dearly beloved, the doors of Spiritual Truth are open to all—it is something to cherish close to your heart *within* the church of your own faith.

"My dear friends, the truth of survival is open to all. It is cool, pure water which will gush from the forbidding rock of reality at the touch of a staff—your own willingness to believe the evidence of your own eyes, of your own God-given senses. It is we, of the faith of survival, who can say with joy and *certainty* in our heart of hearts, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' "

Major Mosquito smiled. He leaned across Molly and switched off the radio. "Got a deck of cards, kid?"

WHEN Molly woke up, Stan was dressing. She looked at the clock: four-thirty. "Where you going?"

"Out."

She didn't question him, but lay awake watching. His movements were so jumpy lately you didn't dare speak to him for fear he would bite your head off. Lately he had been sleeping worse and worse, and Molly worried about him taking so many sleeping pills all the time. She began to cry softly and he came over.

"What's eating you, kid?"

"Stan—" Molly sat up. "Stan, let's quit and go back to the old act."

"Where we going to book it? On street corners? Vaudeville's a dead pigeon. I know what I'm doing. One live John and we're set."

"Honey, you look like hell. Why don't you go see a doctor? Honest, I'm worried sick you're going to have a nervous breakdown or something."

He rubbed his eyes. "I'm going out for a walk."

"It's snowing."

"I've got to get out, do you hear? I'm going down to the church. Go back to sleep."

It was no use. He would just keep going until he dropped and Molly prayed it wouldn't happen some time in the middle of a reading—or of a séance, where it would blow up the whole works.

Stan let himself into the old Peabody house. In the cellar he unlocked an old metal cabinet. Inside was a phonograph turntable which he switched on, placing a pickup arm into position above the aluminum record. Then he went upstairs.

The vast room which had been a parlor and a dining room before he knocked the partition out was chilly. The bridge chairs sat in empty rows, waiting for something to happen to him—something to go wrong. Walking over to a lamp with a dead bulb, he snapped the switch and gave the amplifying tubes a minute to warm up.

Near the organ his foot found the loosened board beneath the carpet, and he put his weight on it. Ghostly came the deep tones of Ramakrishna, his spirit guide. *"Hari Aum.* Greetings, my beloved *chelas,* my disciples of earth life. You who have gathered." The voice stopped; Stan felt a crawling fear flowing over his scalp. The wiring must have broken again. Or was it the loudspeaker? Or the motor? He ran down to the cellar; but the disc was still revolving. It must be in the amplifying unit. There was no time to fix it. The séance was scheduled for that evening.

Stan checked the tubes, the wiring. Then he went back upstairs and began to pry the panel loose. The loud-speaker connections were tight enough. Where was the break? And there was no time, no time, no time. He thought of a dozen stalls to tell a radio repairman, and threw them all out. Once he let anyone know the house was wired he was sunk. There was no one he could trust.

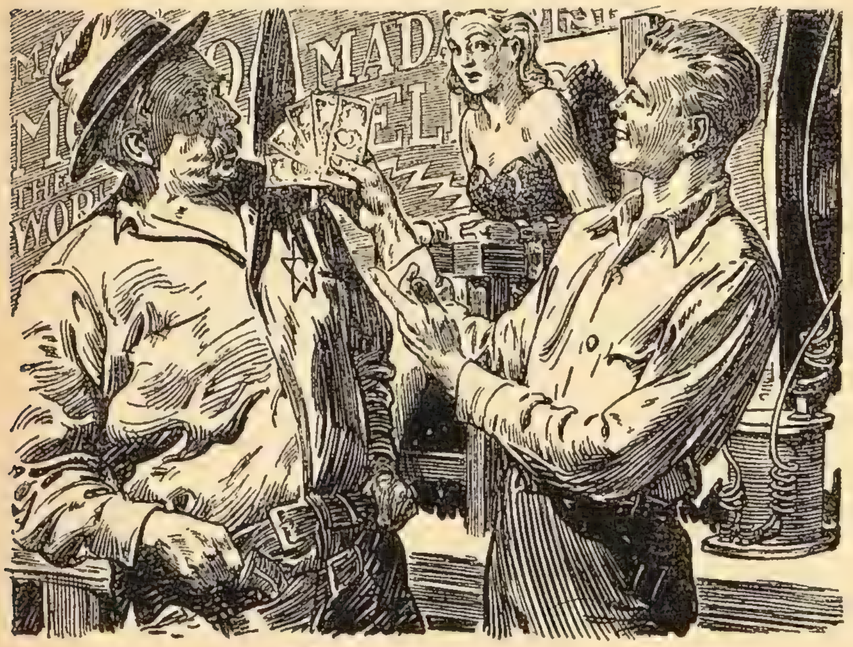
Loneliness came over him, like an avalanche of snow. He was alone. Where he had always wanted to be. You can only trust yourself. There's a rat buried deep in everybody and they'll rat on you if they get pushed far enough. Every new face that showed up at the séances now seemed charged with suspicion and malice. Could there be a cabal forming against him in the church?

Frantically he switched on the phonograph again and stepped on the board. *"Hari Aum.* Greetings, my beloved *chelas* . . ." It wasn't broken! The last time he must have shifted his weight unconsciously off the loose board that closed the circuit. He stopped it now with a chilling fear that the next words the voice, his own voice, would say would not be words he had recorded—the record would turn on him with a malevolent life of its own.

In the silence the house was closing in. He walked up the stairs and in and out of bedrooms, now chastely bare. In the dark-séance room he felt for the panel in the baseboard where he kept the projector.

He aimed it at the wall; and there it was, jumping up and down crazily as his hand shook—the hazy image of an old woman. He twisted a knob and she vanished. Another twist and a baby appeared in a halo of golden mist.

He twisted the hand projector until the baby floated upside down, and he roared with laughter. He fell to the floor, laughing, and aimed the beam at the ceiling, watching the baby fly up the angle of the wall and come to rest overhead. Laughing and strangling, he began to beat the projector against the floor; something snapped, and the light went out.



He crawled to his feet and couldn't find the door and stopped laughing then, feeling his way around and around. He counted nine corners and began to shout. Then he found it and let himself out, dripping with sweat.

In his office the day was breaking gray through the Venetian blinds. The desk light wouldn't come on and he seized it and jerked it out of the wall plug and tossed it into a corner. At last the card index.

R. R. R. Raphaelson, Randolph, Regan—here it was. *Woman psychologist, said to be interested in the occult.* But the phone number, God, it wasn't there. Only her name—Dr. Lilith Ritter. Try the phone book. R. R. R.

The voice that answered the telephone was cool, low-pitched, and competent. "Yes?"

"My name is Carlisle. I've been having trouble sleeping—"

The voice interrupted. "Why not consult your physician? I am not a doctor of medicine, Mr. Carlisle."

"I've been taking pills, but they don't seem to help. I've been working too hard. I want to see you."

There was silence for a long moment; then the cool voice said, "I can see you the day after tomorrow at eleven in the morning."

"Not before then?"

"Not before then."

Stan beat his fist once against the desk top, squeezing his eyes shut. "Very well, Dr. Ritter. At eleven o'clock—Tuesday."

Whatever she might look like, the dame had a wonderful voice. And he must have pulled her out of a sound sleep. But Tuesday— What was he supposed to do until then, chew the rug?

THE nameplate said, "Dr. Lilith Ritter, Consulting Psychologist. Walk in." The waiting room was small, decorated in pale gray and rose.

Stan put down his coat and hat. He lit a cigarette and it burned his finger as he knocked the ashes off. In reaching down to pick it up he knocked down an ashtray. He got on his hands and knees to pick up the butts and that was where he was when the cool voice said, "Come in."

Stan looked up.

This dame wasn't fat, she wasn't tall, she wasn't old. She wore her pale hair drawn into a smooth roll on the nape of her neck. It glinted like green gold. A slight woman, no age except young, with enormous grey eyes that slanted a little.

Stan stared at the woman, who stood holding open the door into another room.

He weaved to his feet, lurching as he came near her. Then he caught a whiff of perfume. As he started to push past her he seemed to fall; he found his arm around her and held on, knowing that he was a fool, knowing something terrible would strike him dead, knowing he wanted to cry, to scream, wondering as he tightened his arms around her. . . .

Stan lay sprawling on the floor. She had twisted his shoulders, turning him until his back was toward her, and then planted one neat foot at the back of his knee. Now she knelt beside him, gripping his right hand in both of hers, forcing it in toward the wrist.

She said, "The Rev. Stanton Carlisle, I believe. Pastor of the Church of the Heavenly Message, a producer of ghosts with cheesecloth—or maybe you use a little magic lantern. Now if I let you up will you promise to be cooperative?"

Stan felt the tears slipping down his face. He managed to say, "Promise."

The deft hands released his and he sat up.

"Here—drink this."

"What—what is it?"

"Just a little brandy."

"Never drink it."

"I'm telling you to drink it. Quickly."

He felt blindly for the glass, held his breath and drank, coughing as it burned his throat.

"Now get up and sit over here in this chair."

Dr. Lilith Ritter was regarding him from across a wide desk. "I thought I'd be hearing from you, Carlisle. You were never cut out to run a spook racket solo."

"LIE back on the couch."

"I don't know what to talk about."

"You say that every time. What are you thinking about?"

"You."

"What about me?"

"Wishing you sat where I could see you. I want to look at you."

"The first day you were here I offered you a glass of brandy to help you get hold of yourself. You said you never drank it. Why?"

"None of your—I—it's something I can't tell you."

"I'm being paid to listen. Take your time."

"The stuff smelled like wood alcohol to me."

"Did you ever drink wood alcohol?"

"God, no, it was Pete. It was in Burleigh, Mississippi. We had a guy in the carny named Pete. A lush. One night he tanked up on wood alky and kicked off."

"What was he to you?"

"Nothing. That is—"

"Take your time."

"He—he was married to Zeena, who ran the horoscope pitch. I wanted to find out how they had done their vaudemental act and I wanted a woman and I made up to her and Pete was always hanging around I gave him the alky to pass him out I didn't know it was wood or I'd forgotten it. He died I was afraid they'd pin it on me but it blew over. That's all. Are you satisfied?"

"Go on."

"That's it. Only I never forgot it."

"But you felt so guilty that you would never drink. And you became a Spiritualist minister."

"I'm a hustler, damn it. Do you understand that? Nothing matters in this lunatic asylum of a world but dough. When you get that you're the boss. I'm going to get it if I have to bust every bone in my head doing it. I'm going to milk it out of those chumps and take them for the gold in their teeth before I'm through. You don't dare yell copper on me because if you spilled anything about me all your other Johns would get the wind up their necks and you wouldn't have any more at twenty-five bucks a crack. You've got enough stuff in that file cabinet to blow 'em all up. If I had that stuff I'd give 'em cold readings that would have 'em crawling on their knees to me. And you sit there out of this world with that dead-pan face and listen to the chumps puking their guts out day after day for peanuts. If I knew that much I'd stop when I'd made a million bucks and not a minute sooner. You're a chump too, blondie. They're all Johns. They're asking for it. Well, I'm here to give it out. And if anybody was to sing to the cops about me I'd tell a couple of guys I know."

"I've been shouted at before, Mr. Carlisle. But you don't really know any gangsters. You'd be afraid of them. Just as you're afraid of me. You're full of rage, aren't you? You feel you hate me, don't you? You'd like to come off that couch and strike me, wouldn't you?—but you can't. You're quite helpless with me. I'm the one person you can't outguess. You can't fool me with cheesecloth ghosts. You're helpless with me."

He was on his knees, one hand beating at his eyes. He crawled to her and threw his head in her lap, burrowing in. Dr. Lilith Ritter, gazing down at the disheveled corn-colored hair, smiled slightly. She ran her fingers gently over his hair, patting his head reassuringly as he sobbed and gasped.

THEY were walking arm-in-arm down a side street in the early summer twilight. In the basement of an old brownstone was a window painted in primary blues and reds; above it a sign, "Double Eagle Kretchma." Gypsy music was filtering out on the heated air.

Stan said, "It looks like a joint to me."

"I like joints. Let's go in."

It was dark with a few couples sliding around on the little dance floor. A sad fat man with blue jowls, wearing a Russian blouse, took them to a booth. "You wish drinks, good Manhattan? Good Martini?"

"Do you have any real vodka?" said Lilith.

"Good vodka. You, sir?"

Stan said, "Hennessy, Three Star, and plain water."

When the drinks came he offered the waiter a bill but it was waved away. "Later. Have good time first. Then comes the payment. Have good time—always have to pay for everything in the end." He leaned across the table, whispering, "You want card reading?"

Lilith looked at Stan and laughed. "Let's."

A woman waddled toward them, her bright red skirt swishing as her hips rolled. She had a green scarf around her head, a curved nose and loose thin lips. She wedged herself into the booth beside Stan.

"You cut the cards, lady. Ah, see! Good sign! This card called The Star. That is good sign, lucky in love, lady. I see man with light hair going to ask you to marry him. Some trouble at first but it come out all right."

Against Lilith's blank, cold face the gypsy's questions bounded back. She turned another card. "Here is Wheel of Life. You going to live long with not much sickness."

Lilith looked at Stan. He pulled two bills from his wallet. "That'll do, sister. Scram."

"Thank you, mister. But lots more fortune in cards. Bad luck, maybe; you see how to keep it away."

"Go on, sister. Beat it."

She shoved the bills into her pocket and heaved out of the booth without looking back.

"She'll probably put the hex on us now," Stan said. "God, what corn. Why the hell did I ever leave the carny? I could be top man in the mitt camp right now and tucking ten grand in the sock at the end of every season."

"You don't want to, darling." Lilith sipped her vodka. "Do you think I'd be sitting here with you if your ambition was to be top man in a—what did you call it?"

"Mitt camp." He grinned weakly. "You're right, doctor. Besides I'd probably have pulled the switch once too often and gotten jugged." He answered her frown. "The switch is what the gypsies call *okana borra*—the great trick. You have the chump tie a buck up in his hanky. He sleeps on it and in the morning he has two bucks and comes running back with all his savings out of the teapot. Then when he wakes up next time, he has nothing in the hank but a stack of paper."

"You know such fascinating bits of folklore, Mr. Carlisle. And you think you could ever be happy using those very keen crafty brains of yours to cheat some ignorant farmer? Even if you did make ten thousand a year?"

He finished the brandy and signalled the waiter for a refill. "And when it rains you read mitts with your feet in a puddle. I'll stick to Mrs. Peabody's house—it's got a better roof on it."

Lilith's eyes had narrowed. "I meant to speak to you, Stan, when we got a chance. There is a woman who will be introduced to your congregation, not directly through me, naturally, but she'll get there. She's interested in yoga. She needs something to occupy her time. I think your Cosmic Breath would be just about right."

Stan downed the drink desperately and found another in its place and finished that one as quickly.

Lilith went on. "The name is Lucinda Barker."

"Anyone else?" Stan's eyes were intent upon hers.

"Well, I know a man—don't be silly, darling, he's a patient. Well, he started as a patient and later became a friend. He's a very shrewd man and he might do us both a lot of good. He's interested in psychic phenomena."

Stan looked stern. "How's he fixed for dough?"

"Very well-heeled, as you would put it. He lost a sweetheart when he was in college and has been weighted down with guilt from it ever since. She died from an abortion. His company makes electric motors. You'll recognize the name—Ezra Grindle."

WHO'S Who:

GRINDLE, EZRA, industrialist, b. Bright's Falls, N. Y. Jan. 3, 1878, s. Matthias Z. and Charlotte (Banks). Brewster Academy and Columbia U. grad. 1900 engineering. m. Eileen Ernst 1918, d. 1927. Joined sales staff, Hobbes Chem. and Dye, 1901, head of Chi. office 1905; export mgr. 1912. Dollar-a-year man, Washington, D. C. 1917-18. Amer. Utilities, gen. mgr. 1919, v.p. 1921. Founded Grindle Refrigeration 1924, Manitou Casting and Die 1926 (subsidiary), in 1928 merged five companies to form Grindle Sheet Metal and Stamping. Founded Grindle Electric Motor Corp. 1929, pres. and chairman of board. . . .

NEWSPAPER clipping, May 29, 1900:

DEATH OF A WORKING GIRL

Last night in Morningside Hospital a slender young girl with raven tresses covering her pillow turned her face to the wall when a youth fought his way into the ward where she lay on the brink of death. She would not look upon him, would not speak to him although he begged and implored her forgiveness. And in the end he slunk away, eluding Officer Mulcahy who had been stationed in the hospital to watch for just such an appearance of the man responsible for the girl's condition and untimely death. He did not escape, however, before a keen-eyed nurse had noted the initials E.G. on his watch fob.

Somewhere in our great city tonight a coward crouches and trembles, expecting at any moment the heavy hand of the law to descend on his shoulder, his soul seared (let us hope) by the unforgiving gesture of the innocent girl whose life he destroyed by his callous self-interest and criminal insistence. . . .

RECORD found in morgue of Morningside Hospital: *1900*. May 28th. Age: 19. Doris Mae Cadle. Diagnosis: septicemia. . . .

THE REV. STANTON CARLISLE said: "Mrs. Meriwether, I am a genealogist. I am looking up the branches of my mother's family—the Cadles. And in an old city directory I noted that someone by that name lived at your rooming house about thirty-five years ago. Of course, I don't expect you to remember."

"Young man, I certainly do remember. A fine girl she was, Doris Cadle. Remember it like it was yesterday. Some kind of blood poisoning. Took her to the hospital. Too late. Died."

"She was one of the Cadles of New Jersey?"

"Might a been. Only, as I recall, she come from Tewkesbury, Pennsylvania. . . ."

"MRS. CADLE, I thought I had all the data I needed but there are a couple of other questions I'd like to ask for the government records." The dark suit, the brief case, the horn-rimmed glasses, all spoke of the servant of government.

"Come in. I been tryin' to find Dorrie's pitcher. Ain't seen it sence I showed it to you a while ago."

"Doris Mae. But you put her picture back in the Bible, Mrs. Cadle." His voice sounded dry and bored. "Let's look again. Here—here it is. You just didn't look far enough. Did I ask you the date of your daughter's graduation from high school?"

"Never graddiated. She took a business course and run off to New York and we never seen her no more."

The collector of vital statistics walked toward Tewkesbury's single trolley line. In his brief case was a roll of film recording both sides of a postcard. One was a cheap photograph of a young girl taken at Coney Island. She was sitting in a prop rowboat named *Sea Breeze.* On the message side was written:

> Dear Mom and all,
>
> I am sending this from Coney Island. It's like the biggest fair you ever saw. A boy named Spunk Grindle took me. Isn't that a silly nickname? I had my picture taken as you can see. Will write soon.
>
> Dorrie.

THE REV. CARLISLE walked to the lectern in the glass alcove, where ferns and palms caught the summer sun in a tumult of green.

He opened the Bible, then gazed straight out above the heads of his congregation.

"My text this morning is from Ephesians Five, verses eight and nine: *'For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth . . .'*"

At the other end of the shadowy room the front door opened and a man appeared, big, in a light gray flannel suit, holding a panama in his hand. The spread of shoulder spoke of arrogant ownership. The man was an owner —land, buildings, acres, machines. And men. Two round, owl-like saucers of light winked from the dark head. He sat down in the back row.

The Rev. Carlisle drew breath and fixed his eyes on the gold-embossed Bible before him.

"My dear friends, let me tell you a story. There was a man who had been in the Great War. One dark night he was sent scouting into No Man's Land with one of his buddies—a star shell rose from the enemy trenches and illuminated the field. The man of whom I speak dashed for the security of a shell hole, pushing his companion aside, while the machine guns of the Germans began to fill the field with death."

Ezra Grindle was fanning himself idly with his hat.

"The soldier who was left without cover fell, mortally wounded. And before the baleful glare of the star shell died, the other soldier, crouching in the shell crater, saw his companion's eyes fixed on him in a mute look of scorn and accusation.

"My dear friends, years passed. The survivor became a pillar of society—married, a father, respected in his community. But always, deep in his soul, was the memory of that dying boy's face—the eyes—accusing him!"

The panama hat was motionless.

"This man recently became interested in Spiritual Truth. He began to attend the church of a medium who is a dear friend of mine in a city out west. He unburdened his heart to the medium. And when they finally established contact with the 'buddy' whose earth life was lost through his cowardice, what do you suppose were the first words the friend in spirit uttered to that guilt-ridden man? They were, 'You are forgiven.'

"Picture to yourselves, my friends, the unutterable joy which rose in that man's tortured heart when the crushing weight of guilt was lifted from him and for the first time in all those years he was a free man!"

Grindle was leaning forward in his chair. He seemed caught and held by the golden voice of the man behind the lectern.

"My dear friends, there is no need for *God* to forgive us. No, no, my friends. We can sin only against mankind. And man, in his next mansion of the soul, says to us tenderly, lovingly, 'You are forgiven, beloved. When you join us you will know. Until then, go with our love, rejoice in your forgiveness, take strength from us who live forever in the shadow of his hand.' "

The tears had mounted to the clergyman's eyes and now they glistened on his cheeks. "Let us pray."

At the back of the room a man who had spent his life ruining competitors, breaking strikes, arming vigilantes, cheating stockholders, and endowing homes for unwed mothers, covered his eyes with his hand.

BEYOND the garden wall a row of poplars rustled in the night wind.

"Your body is relaxed. Your heart is at peace. Nothing troubles you. Your mind is a still, calm pool . . ."

The big man let his hands lie easily on the arms of the deck chair; his legs were propped on the footrest.

Beside him the spiritualist in black was all but invisible under the starlight.

"Close your eyes. When you open them again, stare straight at the garden wall and tell me what you see."

"It's faint—" Ezra Grindle's voice was dreamy.

"Yes?"

"It's growing clearer. It's a city. A golden city. Towers. Domes. A beautiful city—and now it's gone."

The Rev. Carlisle slipped back into his pocket a "Patent Ghost Thrower, complete with batteries and lenses to hold 16 millimeter film, $7.98."

"You have seen the City of Spiritual Light. My control spirit, Ramakrishna, has directed us to build it. It will be patterned after a similar city—which few outsiders have ever seen—in the mountains of Nepal. I myself was permitted to see it. I was leaving the church one snowy night last winter when I felt Ramakrishna near me."

The tycoon's head was nodding belief.

"I was walking through the snow when suddenly the street vanished; it became a stony mountain path. Then, stretching below me in a little valley, I saw the City—just as you have described your vision of it. And I knew that it had been revealed to me for a purpose. Then the mountains seemed to close in and I was back on the doorstep of the Church of the Heavenly Message. But there, stretching away up the sidewalk, were my own tracks of a few minutes before! A few yards farther on they *stopped. I had dematerialized when I reached that spot."*

Grindle said, "A wonderful experience. I've heard of such experiences. But I never thought I'd ever meet a man who had reached such psychic heights." His voice was humble and old and a little foolish. Then he started up from his chair.

A vague light had drifted past on the garden wall. It had the shape of a young girl.

The medium said, "You must relax. No tension. All receptivity—all love."

Grindle settled back. "I—I think I see something, out there by the sundial. Something moving."

It was true. By the shadows at the base of the sundial was a spot of greenish light. Expanding slowly, it moved toward them, a cloud of glowing vapor taking form.

This time the industrialist sat up in spite of Stan's reproving hand on his wrist.

The apparition drifted closer until they could see that it was a girl, dressed in shining garments. She seemed to move a few inches above the ground, drifting toward them then down a breath of night wind.

The believer's voice had become a feeble, despairing whisper. "Dorrie— Could it be Dorrie?"

"My dear . . . " The materialized form spoke. "It's Dorrie. But only for a moment. I can't stay . . . it's hard . . . hard to come back, darling."

The Rev. Carlisle's hand tightened on the older man's arm; but the clergyman himself seemed to have passed into a deep trance.

The ghostly figure was fading. It lost outline, sank into a single dot of green glow and vanished.

"Dorrie—Dorrie—come back. Please—" Grindle was on his knees now by the sundial, where the light had disappeared.

He got to his feet heavily and dropped back into the deck chair, covering his face with his hands. Beside him the Rev. Carlisle stirred and sat up. "I 'went under' very rapidly. What happened?"

"I—I saw an old friend."

MOLLY was so happy she could cry. It had been a long time since they'd had anything like a holiday together. Stan had been acting so screwy. And then, all of a sudden, these three days—just driving, stopping at chicken-dinner shacks and roadhouses. Dancing and, in the daytime, going for a swim wherever a lake looked good. It was heaven; she got sad thinking about going back to the flat and starting all over again, doing nothing, just waiting for Stan to come home.

The Great Stanton pulled himself out of the water and lay beside her on the float. Then he leaned over and kissed her. Molly threw her arms around him. "Oh, honey, don't ever let anything bust us up, honey! All I want is you, Stan."

"Baby, how'd you like to do this every day in the year? Huh? Well, if this deal goes over we're set."

Molly had a cold, sinking feeling inside her. She pressed her face against his chest and began to cry. "Stan, why do we have to be this way? He seemed like a nice sort of old guy—from what I could tell in the dark up there. I felt like an awful heel, honest."

He held her tighter. "Molly, we're in this deeper than you have any idea. That guy has millions. You ought to see that joint in Jersey. It's like a fort. If we step on the flypaper from now on they'll turn a bunch of private cops loose on us. They'll find us no matter where we scram to. We've got to go into it all the way. I've put him in touch with his girl that died when he was in college. He wants to make it up to her somehow. Money doesn't mean anything to that guy. He's willing to give anything—just to get square with his conscience."

Stan took both her hands. "Baby, from now on it depends on you."

LILITH sat behind her desk. She took a cigarette from the box on it.

Stan held his lighter. "She's hooked."

"The virtuous Molly?"

"Sure. It took some selling but she'll play ball. Now let's lay out the moves from here on in. I planted the City of Spiritual Light with him in the garden up at his place. Next séance, we'll start warming him up to the idea of kicking in some dough."

Stan had brought with him a portfolio. He opened it, laying an architect's drawing before the woman who claimed to be a psychiatrist.

A bird's-eye view of a dream city, clustered about a central tower which rose from the desert amid a circling park of palms.

"Very pretty, Reverend."

"There's more." He produced a Geodetic Survey map of an Arizona county. Drawn in red ink and carefully lettered was the location of the City.

Lilith nodded. "And this is the spot where you are going to take off into thin air. Let's go through it again. You go out by train; you buy a car in Texas and drive into this town of Peñas, where you put it in a garage. Then you hire a car. You drive your new car outside the town and park it. You walk back, pick up the hired car, go to your own car, tow it to the spot near the site of the City and hide it well and drive back to Peñas in the hired car. You came back here by train. Correct?"

"Right. Then when we get ready to blow I drive out there, telling him to follow me in a day or two. I drive my car out to the site of the City and just off the highway. I get out, walk a hundred yards straight into the sand, then backtrack to the car, and from there follow the rock to the highway; hike on up the highway and pull out the new car. And drive like hell back east. And I've disappeared in the middle of the desert. He'll come along, following this map, and find the car. He'll follow the footprints—and blam! Gone! And me carrying all that dough. Ain't it a shame?"

She laughed softly at him. "It's complicated, Stan. But you'll probably be able to get away with it."

"I'll get busy this week and rent a hideout."

Dr. Lilith was filing a thumbnail. "Yonkers is a good place. Now how are you going to brush off Molly?"

Stan was pacing the room. "I'll give her a couple of grand and tell her to meet me some place in Florida."

Lilith stood up and came over to him, stretching tailored gray arms up around his neck and giving him her mouth. They swayed for a moment. Then she pushed him away. "Run along, Reverend. I've a patient due in five minutes."

GRINDLE found the Rev. Carlisle in his study. On the desk were letters with currency clipped to them. Stan picked up one which held a ten-dollar bill and read aloud: "'I know the wonderful future which the City holds for us all in the line of a pooling of our spiritual forces. What a joy it will be when our friends and loved ones in spirit life can be with us as often as we wish. God bless you, Stanton Carlisle.'" He smiled at the ten-spot. "It's very touching, Ezra. Some of the letters are from uneducated people—yet their faith is so pure and unselfish. The City will be a dream come true."

Grindle sat staring at the ember of his cigar. "I'll do my share, Stanton. I'm pretty well fixed. This idea of pooling all the spiritual power makes sense to me. Same as any business merger. . . ."

Moonlight struck through fern leaves in the conservatory; the rest of the church was in darkness. The minutes slid by—twenty of them by Stan's luminous-dial watch. He shifted his feet and found the floor board by the organ.

A tinkle came from the trumpet lying on the lectern. Grindle leaned forward, clenching his fists.

The trumpet stirred, then floated in air. Grindle moaned, cupping one hand behind his ear so as not to miss a single syllable. But the voice came thin and clear, a little metallic.

"Spunk, darling . . . this is Dorrie. I hope to materialize enough for you to touch me soon. It's wonderful . . . that you are with us in building the City. We can be together there, darling. Really together. We will be. Believe that. I'm so glad that you are working with us at last. Give your part to Stanton, bless him. And don't forget darling . . . next time I come to you . . . I shall come as a bride."

IT was late when Stan pressed the buzzer outside the apartment. Lilith opened the door. Stan hurried in and threw his brief case on her desk.

From the case he dug the faked letters with currency still attached, which Lilith gathered up, pulling off the cash. She emptied the letters into the fireplace and put a match to them.

Stan was feverishly arranging bills in stacks. "The convincer boodle did the trick, babe. I took every cent I had in the sock—eleven grand. But here's the payoff."

In two brown envelopes were thick oblong packets. He drew them out and broke confining strips of paper. "There it is, baby. How many people ever see that much cash in all their lives? *One hundred and fifty thousand!* Look at it! And the McCoy. I never saw *one* five-yard note before. God almighty, we're lousy with 'em!"

The doctor was amused. "We'd better put them away, darling. That's a lot of money for one person to carry in his pocket. You might spend it foolishly."

She assembled the "take" and placed it back in the envelopes, sealing them. She swung open dummy drawers of the desk, put the money away in a concealed safe and spun the dial.

Stan slid his arms around her roughly. "Baby, baby—this high class layout had me dizzy but I get it good and clear now. Baby, you're nothing but a *gonif* and I love you. We're a couple of hustlers, a pair of big-time thieves. How does it feel?"

He was grinning down at her, squeezing her ribs until they hurt. She took his wrists and loosened them a little, closing her eyes and raising her face to him. "You're wonderful, darling, the way you read my mind."

FOR two days Ezra Grindle had dropped from sight. He had left word: "Away on business." In a tiny bedroom on the top floor of the Church of the Heavenly Message sat the great man. He was wearing the yellow robe of a Tibetan lama.

At intervals Grindle meditated on spiritual things but often he simply daydreamed in the cool quiet. The dreams took him back to Dorrie, and her lips when he kissed her for the first time. He went over every detail. It was amazing what meditation could do. He remembered things he had forgotten for years. Only Dorrie's face eluded him; he could not bring it back.

With the pleasure of pressing a sore tooth, he brought back the evening when she told him what she had been afraid of; and now it was true. His frantic inquiries for a doctor. A hellish week, and then the night they told him she was in the hospital and he ran all the way over there and they wouldn't let him in. And when he did get in Dorrie wouldn't speak to him. It went around and around in his head. But it was slowing down. Soon it would stop and they would be Joined in Spirit.

When the night had come there was a tap at the door and Carlisle entered. "Let us go to the chapel."

Grindle had never seen that room before. A large divan was piled with silk cushions and in an alcove was a couch covered with black velvet for the medium. The entire room was hung in folds of dark drapery.

The clergyman led his disciple to the divan. "You are at peace. Rest, rest."

Grindle felt foggy and vague. The bowl of jasmine tea which he had been given for supper had seemed bitter. Now his head was swimming lightly and reality retreated to arm's length.

The medium placed a votive candle in a sconce on the far wall; its flickering red light deepened the shadows of that dead-black room and the bridegroom's eyesight blurred.

In the alcove the medium lay back on the couch.

They waited. Suddenly ghostly music began. From the curtains before the alcove a light flashed, then a sinuous coil of glowing vapor poured from between them, lying in a pool of mist close to the floor. It swelled and seemed to foam from the cabinet in a cascade.

The pool of luminous matter began to take form. It swayed, then it split and drew back toward the cabinet, revealing the form of a girl, lying on a bed of light, but illumined only by the stuff around her.

Grindle sank to his knees. "Dorrie—Dorrie—"

She opened her eyes, sat up and then rose. The old man groped forward awkwardly on his knees, reaching up to her. As he drew near, the luminous cloud fell back and vanished. The girl stood, white and tall, in the flicker of the votive candle; and as she gazed down at him her hair fell over her face.

"Dorrie—my pet—my honey love—my bride . . ."

He picked her up in his arms, overjoyed at the complete materialization, at the lifelike quality of her body—she was so heartbreakingly earthly.

Inside the cabinet the Rev. Carlisle was busy packing yards of luminous-painted China silk back into the hem of the curtains.

It was up to Molly to break away and get back to the cabinet. Stan turned the switch and a rhythmic, pounding heartbeat filled the room, growing louder.

The quiet forms on the divan stirred, and Stan could see the big man burrowing his face in Molly's bosom. "No—Dorrie—my own, my precious—I can't let you go! Take me with you, Dorrie—I don't want earth life without you . . ."

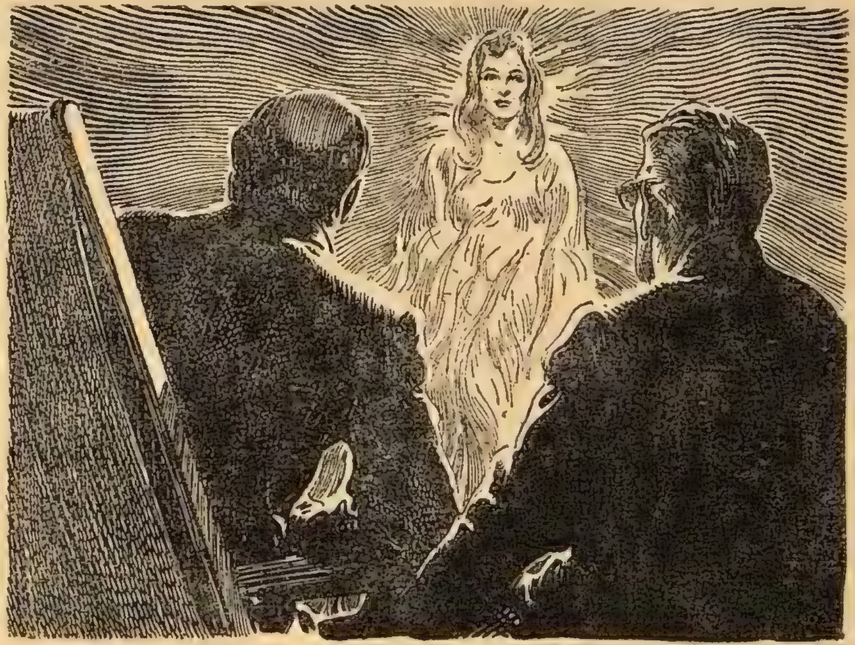
She struggled out of his arms; but the bridegroom seized her around the waist.

Stan grabbed the aluminum trumpet. "Ezra—my beloved disciple—have courage. She must return to us. The force is growing weaker. In the City—"

"No! Dorrie—I must—I . . ."

This time another voice answered him. It was not a spiritual voice. It was the voice of a panicky showgirl who has more than she can handle. "Hey, quit it, for God's sake! Stan! Stan! *Stan!*"

The Rev. Carlisle tore the curtains apart. Molly was twisting and kicking; the old man was like one possessed. In his pent-up soul the dam had broken, and the sedative Stan had loaded into his tea had worn off. Grindle clutched the squirming girl until she was jerked from his hands.



"Stan! For God's sake *get me out of here!*"

Grindle stood paralyzed. For in the dim, red light he saw the face of his spiritual mentor, the Rev. Stanton Carlisle; it was snarling. Then a fist came up and landed on the chin of the spirit bride. She dropped to the floor.

Now the hideous face was shouting at Grindle himself. "You damned hypocrite! Forgiveness? All you wanted was a woman!" Knuckles smashed his cheekbone and Grindle bounced back on the divan.

MOLLY did not stop for clothes. She pulled on her shoes, threw a coat around her and ran from that awful house. She ran all the way home.

In the flat she heaved a suitcase onto the bed and threw into it everything small and valuable she could see. Still crying, she dressed herself.

"Oh, my God, I've got to hurry, somewhere. Stan—oh, damn you, damn you, damn you. Oh—Daddy—"

At the hotel she expected cops any minute but nothing happened. And the address she found in the *Billboard* was the right one. A reply to her telegram got back early the next morning:

SENDING DOUGH NEED GIRL SWORD CABINET ACT COME HOME SWEETHEART ZEENA

LILITH opened the door; she said nothing until they were in the office. Then, "Well?"

Stan had discarded clerical bib and collar. He was sweating, his mouth cottony. "She blew up. I—I knocked out the pair of them and left them there."

Lilith's eyes half closed. "Was that necessary?"

"Necessary? Don't you think I tried to weasel out of it?"

Lilith took a cigarette. "Stan, it may be some time before I can meet you." She swung open the panel and dialed the safe combination. "He may come to me—I'll try to persuade him not to hunt for you." She laid the convincer wad and the two brown envelopes on the desk. "I don't want to keep this any longer, Stan."

He stuffed the money into his pockets. "I'm on my way." He lifted Lilith's face and kissed her, but the lips we cool and placid.

She moved closer to him. "Don't write to me, Stan. And don't get drunk. Promise me."

"Sure. Where you going to write to me?"

"Charles Beveridge, General Delivery, Yonkers."

"Kiss me." This time her mouth was warm.

At the door he kissed her again. Suddenly he drew up, his face sharp with alarm. "Wait a minute, baby. He's going to start thinking back on who tipped me to that abortion. And he's going to think straight to you! Come on, sweetheart, we've both got to scram."

Lilith laughed: two sharp notes like the bark of a fox. "He doesn't know that I know that. I worked it out from things he *wouldn't* say." Her eyes were still laughing. "Don't tell me how to look out for myself, lover."

He grinned and said over his shoulder, "Yonkers," as he walked swiftly out of the door.

MUSTN'T use the car. Cab drivers remember people. Subway to Grand Central. One hundred and fifty grand. Whew!

In a dressing room under the station he opened his traveling bag and pulled out a fifth of Hennessy; he uncapped the bottle for a short one.

A hundred and fifty grand. He picked up a money vest. Then he took up the roll of currency—one handful—his profits from the church racket. Take a fifty and a few twenties and stash the rest away.

Snapping off the rubber band from the fat roll he peeled off the fifty. The next bill was a single. And the one after it. But he hadn't cluttered up the convincer boodle with singles! *Singles!*

He spread out the wad, passing the bills from one hand to the other. Except for the outside fifty the whole works was nothing but ones!

Stan's eyebrows began to itch and the dug at them with his knuckles. He took another pull of brandy. What the hell had gone sour now? Counting over showed three hundred and eighty-three dollars in the boodle. There had been eleven thousand—and the "take"? Good God!

He snatched at one of the brown envelopes. This pile ought to be all five-century notes—

He tore off the brown paper. Singles!

The other envelope. Again—the thick packet contained nothing but one-dollar bills!

The pastor of the Church of the Heavenly Message crushed a handful of them in his fist. He let out an explosive sound like a cough. Then he fired the money into a corner and turned on both faucets of the washbowl. In the roaring water he let himself go; he sank his face in the basin and screamed, the sound bubbling up past his ears. He screamed until his diaphragm was sore and he had to stop and sit down on the floor, stuffing a towel in his mouth and tearing it with his teeth.

At last he reached for the brandy, swallowing until he had to stop and gasp for breath. In the mirror's merciless light he saw himself: hair streaming, eyes bloodshot, mouth twisted. God almighty!

The gypsy switch.

HE stood, swaying, his hair falling over his eyes. Dr. Lilith Ritter said, "Sit down, Mr. Carlisle." Her voice was cold, kind, and sad—and as professional as the click of a typewriter.

His head began to shake as if he were saying no to a long series of questions. It went on shaking.

"I've done everything I can," said the sad voice. "When you first came to me you were in bad shape. I had hoped that by getting at the roots of your anxiety I could avert a serious upset. Well—I failed."

He began rubbing his fingers along the top of the desk, listening to the small whimpering noise of sweat against mahogany.

"Listen to me, Mr. Carlisle." The doctor leaned forward earnestly. "Try to understand that these delusions are part of your condition."

The room was rocking, the lamps were double rings of light, sliding back and forth through each other while the walls billowed.

"The symbolism is quite obvious, Mr. Carlisle. You were filled with the unconscious desire to kill your father. You picked up somewhere—I don't know where—the name of Grindle, an industrialist, a man of power, and identified him with your father. And since I have been your counselor you have made a transference to me—you see me as your mother. That explains your sexual delusions with regard to me."

She was standing up now and leaning across the desk.

"One other thing, Mr. Carlisle. The man you claimed to have killed in Mississippi—I thought at first that was merely another delusion. On investigation, however, I discovered there really was such a death—Peter Krumbein, Burleigh, Mississippi. I know you'll be glad to know *that*, at least, really did happen. And," she went on, "if you make an attempt to get your money back, I'm sure the police would be glad to know about Mr. Krumbein."

She turned away suddenly, and picked up the telephone, the smooth voice brisker now. "Mr. Carlisle, I've done all I can for you, but you *must* have hospital care. These hallucinations— Just put yourself in my hands; you can trust me absolutely.

"Bellevue Hospital? Psychiatric Division, please."

The buzzer hummed; a latch clicked in the foyer. Then the door into the waiting room opened and closed. Someone coming.

He backed away, his mouth hanging open, his eyes bulging. Door. Have to get out. People. Danger.

"Psychiatric Division? This is Dr. Lilith Ritter. Please send an ambulance . . ."

The door, rushing behind him, shut off her voice.

Get out. Street. Hide. He clung to the knob, holding the door shut so she couldn't follow him.

Dream. Nightmare. Delusion. Nothing . . . sold out. Trapped . . . gypped . . . nightmare.

IN the office trailer McGraw heard a tap on the screen door. "Yeah, what d'ya want?"

"Wanna talk t'you, 'bout a 'traction."

"Come on in. What you got to sell?"

The bum was hatless, shirt filthy. Under his arm he carried a roll of canvas. "Allow me t'introduce myself—Allah Rahged, top-money mitt reader. All ready t'go t'work. Lemme give you demonstration."

McGraw took the cigar out of his mouth. "Sorry, brother. We don't hire no boozers! Go on, beat it!"

"Jus' give me chance. Real, old-time, A-number-one mitt reader. Read past, present—"

McGraw was letting his eyes slide over the tall man. The hair was dirty black, but at the temples and over the forehead was a thin line of yellow. Dyed.

The canny boss suddenly smiled up at his visitor. "Take a seat, bud." From a cupboard behind him he lifted a bottle and two shot glasses. "Have a snort?"

"I thank you, sir. Very refreshing. I'll need only a fly and a table—hang my banners on the edges of the fly."

McGraw shook his head. "I don't like a mitt camp. Too much trouble with the law."

The bum was eyeing the bottle, his red eyes fastened on it.

"Have another? No, mitt camps are old stuff. Always got to have something new. Sensational."

Stan nodded absently, watching the bottle. McGraw put it back in the cupboard. "Sorry, bud. Some other outfit, maybe. But not us. Good night."

The rum-dum pushed himself up, hands on the chair arms, and stood, swaying, blinking down at McGraw.

"Yeah, sure." He stumbled, reached the screen door, and pulled it open. "Well, so long, mister."

"Hey, wait a minute."

The lush was already back in the chair. "Hey, mister, how 'bout 'nother li'l shot 'fore I go?"

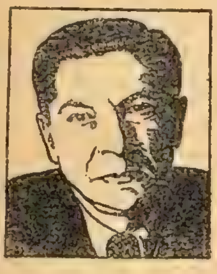
"Yeah, sure. But I just happened to think of something. I got one job you might take a crack at. It ain't much, but'll keep you in coffee and cakes and a shot now and then. What do you say? Of course, it's only temporary—just until we get a real geek."

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By Helen Greenwood

ARTHUR KOESTLER'S Thieves in the Night is the story of Joseph who went out to Palestine with a group who were forming an agricultural commune. On the journey out he fell in love with Dina but, in the face of her reluctance, became the lover of Ellen and was presently compelled to marry her or risk expulsion from the community.



Arthur Koestler

And then Dina was killed by an Arab who resented the colonists as intruders. Joseph's despondency drove him to leave the commune to join an underground terrorist group.

The story of all the individuals, despite the clarity and beauty with which they are drawn, is not the novel's backbone. You are reading, really, the struggle of a small typical group to hold to what they have against the determination of the English and the Arabs that they shall give up. The power of the book is in the author's understanding of the struggle and his ability to lay the spell of its drama upon the reader.

The Macmillan Company, New York. Price $2.75.

EARL WILSON, saloon editor of the New York Post, has written another book about New York after midnight—**Pikes Peek or Bust.** Here is the story of the nude model who wouldn't stop for a drink because she was hot and tired and wanted to go right home and get her clothes off. And the tale of the woman entering the theater to see Hamlet who was heard telling her escort, "I hope this isn't the same Hamlet Shakespeare wrote. I saw that one before."

Earl Wilson

Mr. Wilson is at his best when he is writing about his own and other newsmen's experiences. He tells of Arthur Mefford's expense account item of "$2000 for one house of ill fame"—the amount it cost him to uncover Kip Rhinelander's whereabouts. And Chester Morrison, in listing "'Railway fare from —— to ——, $47,' would slice out names of the two supposed cities with a razor blade, giving the impression censors had taken them out for military security."

This sort of light, random reminiscence always makes entertaining reading.

Doubleday and Company, Inc., New York. Price $2.

UNEASY SPRING, by **Robert Molloy,** is the penetrating study of a middle-aged widower who had had a perfect marriage but who was disinclined to marry again. Struggling to be both father and mother to his two children, he found himself beset by problems. And then he met Frances Waterman, who was almost twenty years younger than he. The romance between them was turbulent and exciting, but it was to his wife's cousin, Mary Oliver, that he was forced to turn when things at home went wrong.

The conflict in his hero's feeling for the two very different women has been shrewdly handled by Mr. Molloy.

The Macmillan Company, New York. Price $2.75.

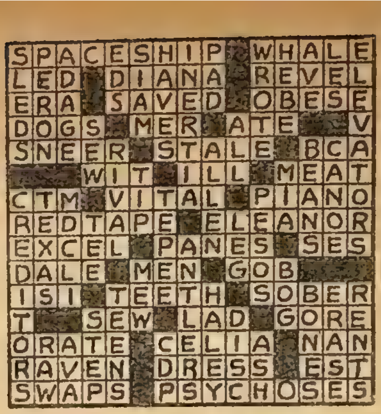
LIMBO CITY, by **Edwin B. Self,** is a powerful and realistic novel of the hop fields of Oregon. Mr. Self has taken a cross section of a hop growing community and has probed into the life of the owners and workers in a manner that is reminiscent of Steinbeck.

Herald Publishing Co., New York. Price $2.

QUIZZ-ICAL CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane

Puzzle (401)



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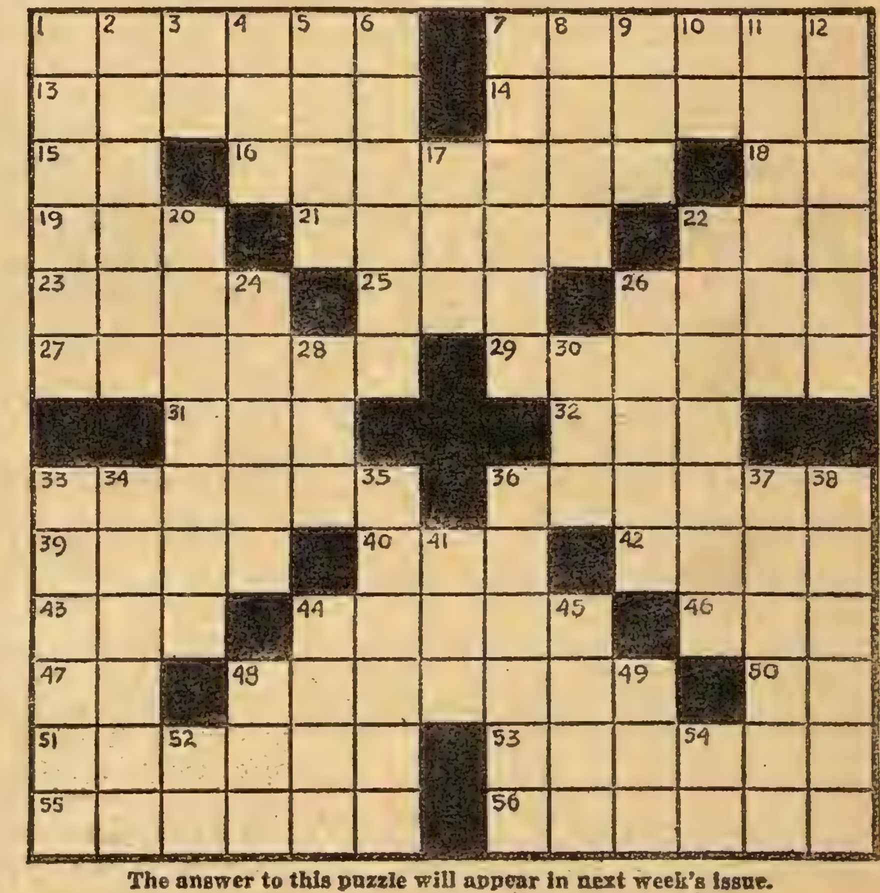
Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

1 The prickly pear is a species of what?
7 In Victorian days faulty whats were thought to cause unnatural pallor?
13 Beethoven's Third Symphony is called the what?
14 L'Aiglon (hero of Rostand's play about the Duke of Reichstadt) means the what?
15 Miss Perkins, familiarly
16 Flexibility
18 Oh!
19 Which tide dries the shore?
21 Complete: Be he ——, or be he dead, I'll grind his bones to make my bread
22 First Sunday after Easter is what Sunday?
23 Pale green is called what?
25 Lodes and lodes of matter
26 Fat sopranos cover lots of what?
27 The hero of Grimm's Seven at One Blow is a what?
29 Orange and purple make what color?
31 What's the Original Cause of the world's woes?
32 The what Anne is a river of Quebec? (abbr.)
33 What dog crouches at its work, has feathered legs and tail?
36 What alleged San Francisco laborite dynamiter was thought unjustly jailed?
39 Non-weather side
40 What meets at Lake Success, New York? (old abbr.)
42 Stir up a *lier* (anag.)
43 Balm of Gilead's a product of the balsam what?
44 What's a synonym for poor traders?
46 In the early '20s folks were advised to keep cool with whom?
47 Name the most Karloffian of murder weapons
48 The kneecap is also known as the what?
50 49
51 Tree bark with nearly parallel clefts is said to be what?
53 Ten eat makes what antiseptic?
55 What is it Tuesday's child did?
56 Rateen (anag.)

VERTICAL

1 Of what mixer did they recently sing putti putti?
2 What desert country is still largely unexplored?
3 What's the U. S. equivalent of Lt.?
4 A pourboire's a what?
5 What California brainery has experienced remarkable growth recently? (abbr.)
6 What is Popeye's profession?
7 For bringing law to Colorado (which he named), what city is named after James William ——?
8 *Care* for a sprint? (anag.)
9 Archaic aged
10 The, spaghetti-flavored
11 Whom did the old boys see home singing?
12 —— Mater
17 Complete: The Lass with the Delicate ——
20 Al Jolson used to sing that he'd "raise a what on your big fat sister"?
22 What's used in insecticides, glass making, hay fever cures, pigments, and murder?
24 Name a kind of now-soured crème de la creme of Hitler's corps
26 Name the stormy petreless of British politics (with Lady)
28 It's a choice of no or what world?
30 Name the world's largest and most welcome entertainment wheel (abbr.)
33 An African Shank's Mare Express train would be a what?
34 The alchemists used a what to change lead into gold?
35 What kind of armaments might symbolize a world at peace?
36 The which Rouge is a famed Paris hot spot, and means mill?
37 Who ate her heart out for Lancelot?
38 A noisesome brat
41 What is it Scotch yesmen never say?
44 The relaxed person does things with what?
45 Name a kind of maid or gin
48 "—— my word!" cried the British lord (abbr.)
49 What's a variation of Edith?
52 To what state belongs the spoils right now? (abbr.)
54 On the spot in a game



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

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ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN IN HUNGARY

Continued from Page 9

Budapest may be telling you, they can be understood only by a clear conception of how Hungary's revolution began—by knowing how Hungary has changed, and what the changes have done to Hungary's people and her politics. A social revolution can be a *revolution,* you know, even if it develops without bloodshed. What matters is that this nation's basic economic system and the means of livelihood of its people have been radically altered.

THE Hungarians have taken cruel punishment. For nearly two months their capital was fought for by Nazi and Russian armies, street by street and house by house. And after the Red Army swept on into Austria, all of Hungary (an enemy country) remained a vast looting ground for the Russian troops. The Soviet troops had fought desperately for four years. Legions of them badly needed shoes, sweaters, and warm overcoats. Their fingers also itched for wrist watches and bracelets, cameras and fountain pens—and many other things they had never owned in their lives. They remembered how Hungarians had fought alongside the Germans in Russia, so they looted on a wholesale scale. After Germany's surrender, hundreds of thousands of Russians were sent back home through Hungary; most of them made their traversal a vigorous "souvenir hunt." Since the Germans had done the same thing, it's difficult to find many Hungarians who did not lose most of their personal belongings in the process.

Meanwhile Hungary's own long-exploited masses, the underdogs of the lower classes, also ran amok with the liberation. They sacked and set fire to Budapest's finest hotels—the Ritz, St. Gellert, Carlton, and the Hungaria. They pillaged right and left. Out in the country some 1,500 baronial mansions of the extremely wealthy Hungarian nobility were ruthlessly stripped of their costly furnishings and their art treasures. Tenant farmers, whom these princes and barons had paid no more than twenty or twenty-five cents a day for years and years, seized this moment of chaos as their great opportunity for revenge. They stole or destroyed the choicest possessions of the callous aristocrats who had kept their heels on the necks of the Hungarian peasants for many generations. The Hungarian "underdogs" are credited with having committed even more wholesale looting and destruction than either the Germans or the Russians.

This was the first phase of the revolution in Hungary. The second phase was the new Hungarian land reform of March 15, 1945. That finished off the old feudal ruling class which had dominated and governed Hungary for hundreds of years. There had never been anything even faintly approaching a democracy in this Danubian land. Hungarians had never had free elections. In a total population of something over 8,000,000 the number of landless farm laborers was between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000. More than 30 per cent of all tillable land was in the hands of big landowners, whose estates ranged from 2,500 acres up to the fabulous 298,000 acres monopolized by Prince Paul Esterházy. Aside from their food, hundreds of thousands of farm laborers or tenant farmers earned much less than $100 for a year's work —and some received as little as $30 for one year.

The big landowners' great estates had mostly been family possessions since feudal times—from the fifteenth, sixteenth, or seventeenth century. Peasants who worked these estates got whatever their aristocratic bosses cared to pay. The landless peasants and their large families lived like serfs, in extreme poverty, even in the 1930s. The system was both profitable and comfortable for the rich owners—and the big landowners controlled Parliament and the government. So nothing of any consequence was ever done to give land to Hungary's land-starved millions. In Spain the same feudal exploitation still exists. The Hungarians, like the Spanish people, have cried for a just land reform. But nothing was ever done, because the people had no real voice in the government.

UP to the end of this war the twenty-five largest estates in Hungary ranged from 45,000 acres up to 298,000 acres. Sixteen of these were owned by Hungarian nobles or in the name of the exiled royal family, and the nine others were owned by various Roman Catholic orders. Thus it was chiefly the nobility and the Church who stood to lose through a land reform, and these two groups had been partners in the ruling class since feudal times. Some of their representatives recognized that redistribution of Hungary's land was long overdue. Count Michael Károlyi courageously handed over all of his inherited soil to needy peasants, but most of his titled acquaintances regarded that generous example as a "crackpot" gesture.

So the war's end unleashed a peasants' demand for land that blew the Hungarian aristocrats and the Church landowners sky-high. Because the masses were clamoring, and because the Red Army was on the spot, the old ruling class didn't dare to take over the government. The new provisional government was Soviet-sponsored. In the land reforms, however, it clearly followed the popular demands of the great majority of Hungarians. So the land revolution came swiftly—and it was certainly revolutionary. In sixteen months it completely destroyed Hungary's feudal land system. In the process it reduced Hungary's nobility to an impotent minority. Without great wealth, they are politically powerless. In the same way, the Church's previous influential role in the nation's politics and government has been radically diminished.

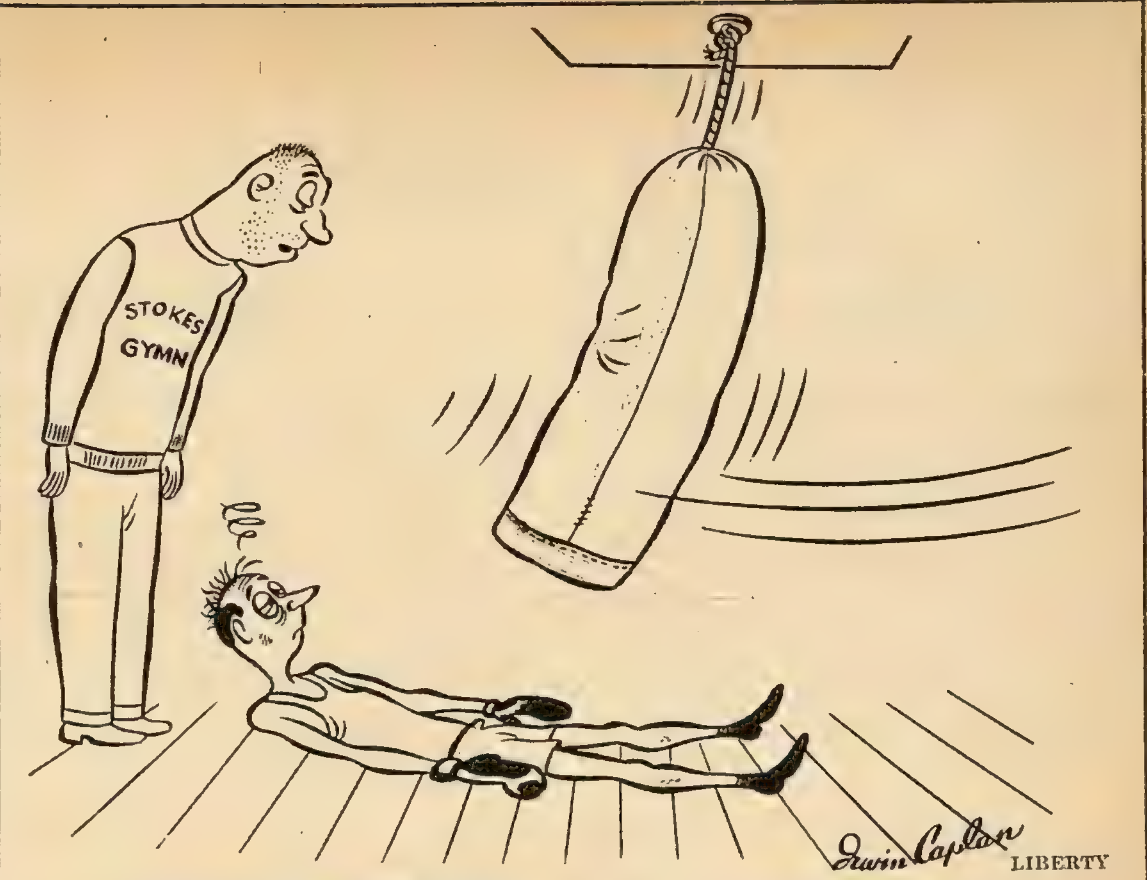
By September, 1946, the land revolution was virtually completed. More than 7,195,000 acres of soil had been redistributed—and that means over half of all the tillable land in Hungary. According to figures given me by Cardinal Mindszenty, the amount of property expropriated from the Church totaled 1,108,700 acres. As the result of cutting up all estates and farms of more than 142 acres, some 642,000 Hungarians have

"Of course I'll see you in court! . . *I'm* the judge!"

LIBERTY

become new landowners. Most of these were farm hands, agricultural workers, or owners of plots too tiny for self-support. By this nation-wide redistribution the whole foundation of Hungary's basic economy has been completely changed. You might call the land reform Hungary's Revolution Number One.

But a second revolutionary tidal wave struck the Hungarians last spring and summer, even before the first one had run its course. The nation's currency went wildly out of control. Where the prewar pengo had been worth five to the dollar, and then a few hundred to the dollar after liberation, its value in relation to foreign stable monies began to drop like a plummet. That's what they call inflation—a snowstorm of paper money. The pengo hit 50,000,000 to the dollar, then one billion to the dollar, and finally vanished in the stratosphere somewhere between a quadrillion and a quintillion to the dollar. The government had to invent a new currency, called the florin, and try to hold it down to earth.



"Don't feel so bad, Mr. Bennett. You can't win them all, you know."

WHEN a currency blows up, what happens? Well, suppose it had been our U. S. dollar. What you bought last week for $10 might at first cost you $200. Then, in a few weeks, you would be paying $10,000 for a haircut, or maybe a loaf of bread. Of course, your employer would then be paying you something like $200,000 paper dollars a week—but he never could raise wages as fast as the dollar lost its value. Say you had managed to put $3,000 in the savings bank over a period of many years, and had insured your life for $10,000. Suddenly your life savings would be worth only the price of a postage stamp. And the $10,000 insurance you were going to leave your wife wouldn't pay for her ticket to the movies.

If you can imagine this sort of thing happening to you—what it would do to you and everyone you know—then you begin to understand what happened to the entire Hungarian people last June and July. Everyone, except the very rich people with solid property, lost practically all the cash they had in the world. The cash savings of millions of people were burned up in the inflationary fire—just went up in smoke. And of course the people who lost the most were people with moderate savings and a modest income. The white-collar class (professors, teachers, doctors, clerks, and minor executives and civil employees) were suddenly "cleaned out." Because their savings were now valueless they had to sell or barter their belongings—their radios, cameras, jewelry, fur coats, or what have you—in order to get food or other urgent things. So what the war looters missed among the Hungarian middle class was stolen by the inflation.

The upshot of it is that the Hungarian middle class—the class which is a bulwark against extreme radicalism or Communism in every country—was expropriated by the inflation, just as the aristocratic big landowners were expropriated through the land reform. While the nobility was knocked flat, Hungary's white-collar class was left reeling against the ropes. By pegging the new florin at 11.66 to the dollar, and keeping it there into the autumn, the government managed to give the middle class a terribly needed chance to catch its breath. Prices were still fantastically high, but anything was better than the nightmare of inflation—and the pengo's had been the greatest and most extreme of any ever recorded.

But the Communist-dominated Budapest government had fixed the new currency's rate much higher than it ought to be. The florin was so overvalued that neither America nor Britain can afford to buy Hungarian products. Many people here insist that this was what the Hungarian Communists wanted; that they wanted to squeeze the western powers out of any trade with Hungary. But the boomerang is this: if the Anglo-Americans can't buy Hungarian goods, they cannot loan Hungary money. And the florin cannot be kept stable, safe from another inflation, without a sizable foreign loan. In addition, without outside credits, Hungary cannot rebuild its devastated areas or restore its war-damaged industries. So the overvalued florin is nothing more than an artificial stopgap.

At the same time employers, who lost most of their cash assets in the inflation, had increasing difficulty in meeting their payrolls. From August onward unemployment began to grow rapidly, as tens of thousands of people were laid off. A black and dangerous winter is assured for the Hungarians.

These are sufficient facts to illustrate what I mean when I describe Hungary as still being in mid-revolution. A second inflation is inevitable in this hard-hit and hard-luck country. The only question is whether the government can keep another inflation under reasonable control—can restrain it and cushion its blows. Beyond this there exists a question as to whether the Hungarian Communists, who have controlled the government's economic and financial policies until now, will want to prevent an extreme inflation of the florin. The opponents of the Communists sometimes charge that they count on winning more converts to Marxism the more impoverished the Hungarian people become.

IN any case, the soundest Hungarian experts on financial matters are convinced that a second runaway inflation, if it comes, will provoke rioting and bloodshed on a serious scale. Other well-qualified observers say the Hungarian people have already suffered so much and lost so much that one more uncurbed destruction of their currency would drive many among them to violent extremes. This is why the future is absolutely unpredictable in Hungary.

This is why Hungary today is a nation virtually without a future. Yet, despite all this, Hungarians can still smile and sometimes even laugh. In their Oriental make-up they know the secret of living a day at a time. This is how they have lived through the summer and autumn—on the thinning edge of another inflationary catastrophe. If the florin should explode into a blizzard of paper money, who can tell how much else might blow up with it?

In Budapest, as I write, you feel as though you were sitting tied on a keg with a spluttering time fuse. You have no way of knowing just how much TNT has been stuffed into the keg. Maybe some magician will manage to cut the fuse in time. Maybe the fuse will burn more slowly than the explosive experts estimate. And if you're Hungarian you can't get off the keg. If you are Hungarian, it's almost impossible for you to get a permit to leave your own country even for two weeks.

Thus, after two great revolutionary convulsions, Hungary's social revolution is by no means over. Even if the domestic Communists or Moscow should earnestly desire to avoid the risks of social disorders in Hungary, one cannot be certain that they are willing to adopt the policies necessary to prevent a disastrous second inflation. For one thing, the Soviets apparently do not want any American or British economic and financial influence in Hungary. But without Anglo-American help and Big Three co-operation it appears that Hungary's currency cannot possibly achieve a safe degree of stability. Big Three co-operation to restore Hungary offers the only permanent solution—but nobody knows how long it will be before Moscow will consider such co-operation.

IT'S not difficult, then, to see why the hard-luck Hungarians are a people without any discernible future. They had the bad luck to be on the wrong and losing side in both World Wars—chiefly because fate placed them too close to powerful Germany. In the period between the wars the Hungarian people were sold out by their political leaders. Under the Regent, Admiral Horthy, a feudalistic upper-class minority ran the country. Today another minority, the representatives of the 17 per cent which Hungarian Communists polled in the postwar elections, have the most to say about governmental policies. The Hungarian parties now have the fairest proportionate representation in Parliament that the people have ever had—but the 57-per-cent Small Landholders Party has far less executive influence than the 17-per-cent Communists.

The luckless Hungarians can do nothing much but wait and see, living from hand to mouth a day at a time. But even in their hopeless predicament these curiously fatalistic Magyars can still sing. And one of their favorite very old gypsy songs somehow gives an astonishingly accurate, if melancholy, portrait of the plight of present-day Hungarians. It goes like this:

I have no money and no tobacco.
Comrade, buy my coat!
For the old one should be good
enough:
Nobody sees me but the meadows.
I am going away with the fall of
the leaves,
And the fog shall lie before me and
behind me.

Only a people who never got any breaks could love a song like this.

THE END

Woman-Talk

BY MARGARET FISHBACK

DOWN AND OUT: After the weeks of work and the miles of trudging to select gifts, wrap, and mail them, it always seems a shame that we can't enjoy the glitter and excitement of Christmas a little longer. No sooner does Momma catch her breath after preparation for the Big Day, complete with turkey, plus the cataloguing of gifts for acknowledgment, and the thrifty smoothing out of festive Christmas paper and ribbons than the tree begins to molt and look reproachfully thin. From that moment on, though the children protest it's too soon to pack away the shining balls, and Momma knows darn well it's much sooner than she wants to be bothered with that ultimate Christmas chore, she also knows she'll be ankle-deep in green needles every morning unless she takes a firm stand. Those who live in the country, where they can be sure of a fine fresh tree, have the edge on us city families who can never assay the tree's durability until it has spent a few days in an overheated apartment. Personally, I'd rather have needles on the floor, windowsills, and shedding into the cereal than take the tree down before January 2. Even then, it's painful to see it go, and I am always saddened by the annual parade of trees, down and out, their last valiant shreds of tinsel waving gallantly in the winter wind.

REST IN PEACE, IF POSSIBLE

Farewell to nineteen forty-six,
A year replete with politics.

LET US PRAY

I think we'd better count on Heaven
To bring real peace in forty-seven.

ANNUAL CARD SCRAMBLE: This is the week when thousands of well-wishers who didn't get around to sending Christmas cards will converge on the greeting-card counters for New Year's messages to mail to those thoughtful and efficient souls who remembered them with Christmas cards. It is a blessing for the conscience-stricken that they have that second chance to disseminate good wishes, otherwise they would envy more than ever those hardened characters who boast they *never* send Christmas cards. I have never been able to attain such detachment, and always intend to make up for my shortcomings at Christmas and New Year's by sending friends suitable greetings from time to time throughout the year. December isn't the only month that pals like to be remembered. As a matter of fact, cards that arrive on unscheduled dates naturally get more attention than those that descend in mass formation. Heck, what am I trying to do, salve my own conscience with pious plans for the coming year? Well, one thing I *will* do—after my youngster has had his fill of enjoyment from the season's greetings (and how kids do love colorful cards), I'll salvage all that haven't been unduly battered, and send them to church, school, and hospital for others to enjoy.

RESOLUTIONS FOR 1947: I'm going to start right now on *next* year's Christmas shopping. . . . I'm going to finish *all* my thank-you letters before New Year's Eve. . . . I'm not going to race for buses, or tear up or down subway steps as though there were only one bus or train a day. . . . I'm not going to stew when stuck in line behind twenty enormous housewives at our enormous Super Market. . . . I won't let my small son goad me into losing my temper just to satisfy his passion for melodrama. . . . I'll stop apologizing to friends and being on the defensive about furniture and slip covers that have suffered from close association with a velocipede and assorted trains, hammers, wrenches, and screw drivers, all constructive weapons from a child's point of view. . . . I'm not going to make myself miserable and ruin the tag ends of a mediocre disposition by taking on obligations, social or business, that I haven't the time to handle.

NOCTURNE CREOLE

Continued from Page 11

figures hurrying through the shadows, fans of light spread out from corner bars all open to the night, juke music and the stale smell of beer. She stumbled once and nearly fell. She saw that she had slipped on the contents of an upset garbage pail. The city stank; the below-sea-level air was suffocating, and the revelry was the grimacing of strangers desecrating a shrine.

She had been in New Orleans eight hours and for the first time in her life. But she had been dreaming of it on every step of the stair out of childhood. The people would resemble her mother and father, gentle, gay Creoles in a mellow old town, twinkling through life in a sort of continuous minuet; a small, intimate, integrated community where courtesy and grace bloomed bright. Slowly it dawned on her that the New Orleans she had conjured out of the stories her parents had told her, out of old books and her own agile gift for fantasy, was nonexistent; a puff of hope dissipated like her marriage and her love in the black wind from Pontchartrain.

She found herself in a wider, lighter thoroughfare. A masker dressed like a frog rolled toward her, followed by a wake of children shouting with delight. The frog was drunk. He waved a green leg at her and she was forced to dodge under it. The frog zigzagged on with his enraptured retinue in hot pursuit; but Maryse had lifted her eyes and seen a street sign.

The sign proclaimed, Racine Alley—and the name clicked. For the first time since leaving the hotel she became interested in her surroundings. Racine Alley pronged off at an angle. Maryse promptly turned into it and saw what she was looking for.

A STRIP of macabre green neon curled into words, The Gargling Pelican. There was a weathered ugly building at the far corner and a rusty gate into a yard with tables under a pair of immensely old and gnarled crepe-myrtle trees. The sign dripped vertically from the high arched gate. People sat at the tables drinking, some in costume, some not; they drifted unsteadily about. From the shacklike structure behind came ragged jangles of stringed music and incoherent voices. It was all tawdry and drunken. Suddenly a fat woman waddled out of the bar shack and began to sing in a harsh voice. She got a spattering of applause against her song—and no attention.

Maryse hesitated, peering in. Another bubble had burst among her diminishing store. So this was the Gargling Pelican. Here was the address to which she had directed those childish notes to her friend and former roommate, Renne, who had married the big night-club proprietor from New Orleans and gone to

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preside over a "dream spot in your very own New Orleans, Maryse. I do a featured number now and then, but mostly I lead a lazy life. Wish you could see our cozy nook."

She had pictured the Gargling Pelican as neat, quaint, a set in a ballet; an immaculate and gleaming oasis possible only in New Orleans, an enclave of magnolia blossoms and flutes to three-four time. Maryse, who had learned early the reality of night clubs, had clung nevertheless to the gross illusion that there existed somewhere—probably at the Gargling Pelican—a sort of super-duper club, a pavilion of pure, pink, spun-sugar delight, justifying the sweat and noise and vulgarity of her own monotonous routines at the Chi Chi.

Instead here was another lie unfolding. Maryse narrowed her eyes, braced herself grimly against any more blows, and walked through the gate. This was the truth. This was the way things were. It had been a lie about the Gargling Pelican; it had been a lie about love. The truth was that your husband turned out to be a heel, struck you on your wedding night, and insulted you and all your people. It was a lie—the one her mother and father had told her—about waiting for the one man who would become the sum and sun of your existence. A lie about the worth-whileness of being gentle and merry and good. A lie about New Orleans, *particularly* about New Orleans. A lie, possibly, about Creoles, her people, too; the truth might be as ugly as Hank had painted it in his drunkenness.

She thought of her mother and father, dead five years, dead together in a capricious automobile wreck. In her desperate misery she resented only that they could not be confronted, here and now, with the falsity of their words and their world. She resented what they had told her and she blamed them for not telling her enough—she knew only they had left New Orleans because of some rankling family quarrel. Violent surmises mushroomed out of her bitterness: perhaps her parents had committed a crime and had *had* to leave.

All right. She'd never be flimflammed again. She hadn't pitted herself, at fifteen, against the icy geometries of Manhattan for nothing. She'd survive. She had no money; she'd left her purse in the hotel room and she wouldn't go back for her modest roll. She wouldn't go back to the Chi Chi, either. That was finished, gone, abhorrent.

THE bar was long and narrow; it had a lunch-wagon look. She went through the packed humanity dexterously, elbows clearing a way through grunts and scowls.

Suddenly she saw Renne, her dark, big-eyed face suspended above the crowd at the bar as though floating. That was because Renne sat on a high stool by the cash register at the far end.

"Darling! What are you *doing* here?"

Renne's long, sultry face was still pretty. It was a little plumper. It was a little different. Shadows under the eyes were deeper and lower. The old animation had to struggle back.

Maryse plowed between a snarling couple and looked up.

"Hello, Renne."

Renne cried out, "Pete! Hey, you, Pete! C'm'ere and take this thing. I gotta see a friend."

Renne was making frantic motions to a dark man in a pink shirt behind the bar, maneuvering brazen lovely legs and slipping down from the stool.

She embraced Maryse and steered her quickly toward a door at the far end, tossing a soiled apron across the bar. The dark man yelled, "Make it snappy!"

"We can talk over here, out of that madhouse. Ain't business great, honey? I told you."

They crossed a sort of crypt between two buildings, noisome with assorted debris, and Renne opened another door. Inside was a pungent gloom. Beer cases were stacked to the ceiling along one wall. Against the other stood a worn reed chaise longue. There were two wicker chairs and a table.

"We use this dump to snooze in afternoons sometimes. I want you to see our apartment uptown. It's nice. But any port in a storm." Renne pushed Maryse into a chair, settled herself on another and happily lighted a cigarette. "You sweet baby! How come you didn't write?"

"I came down to get married. A boy you don't know." Maryse forced a curdled chuckle. "He's a heel. That's off now."

Renne raised heavy eyebrows.

"Honey, you go *back*. Pete got tight when we were married, too. But you go back. You were always a sweet baby and didn't know anything about men. Go back and it'll be all right. I promise."

She smiled, reached behind the chair, came up with a bottle and a glass. "Here's a reliever. It's fake absinthe, but it has authority. Want one?"

"No."

"Listen. You didn't marry that Pierre, did you?"

Maryse started. The name brought back a fleck of blood on Hank's coat lapel.

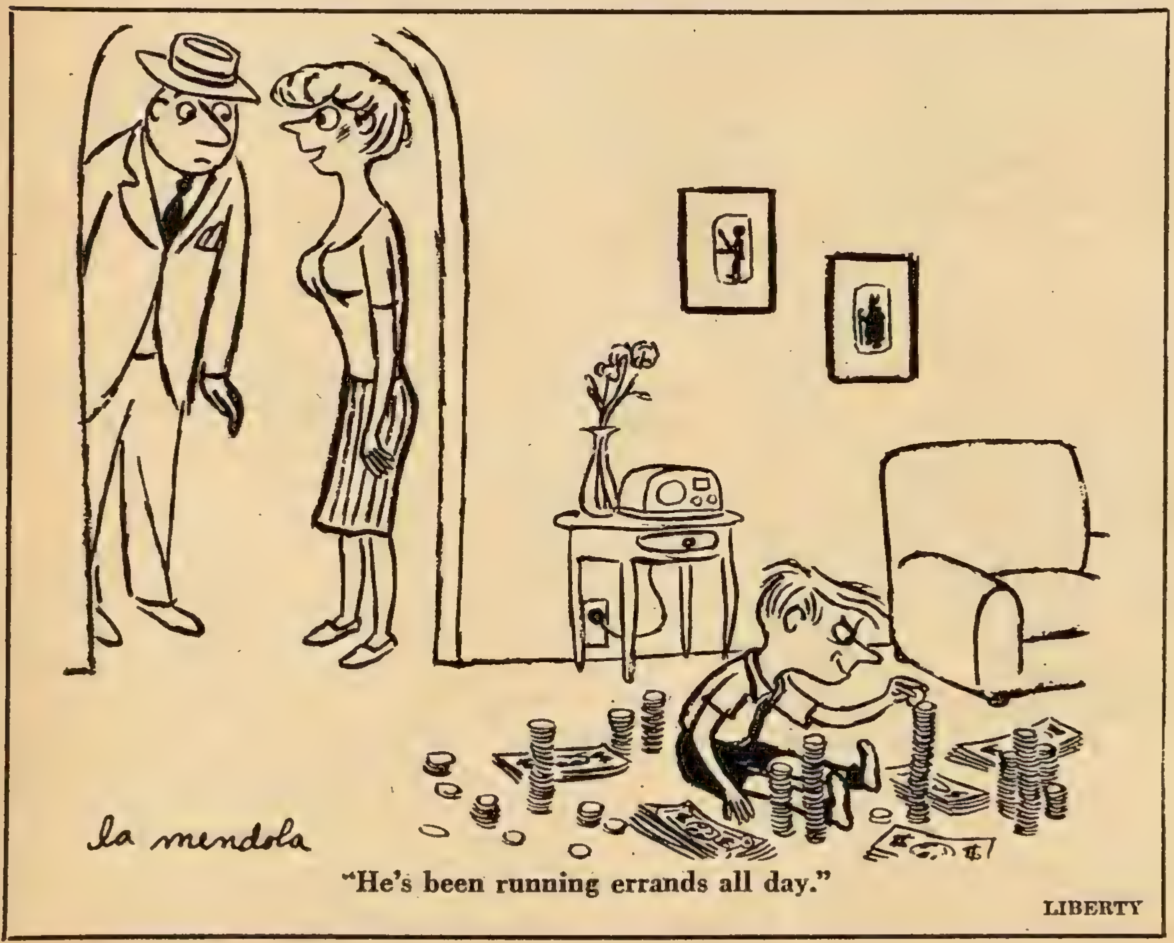
"Oh, no. Why'd you mention him?"

"He comes in sometimes. Always gets that moony look when I mention you. I was guessing."

MARYSE pursed her lips. She shivered, opening her coat over a now miserable corsage, which she unpinned deliberately and pitched into a corner. She was a little girl close to tears. "We were in Larabie's, drinking champagne. Only been married a little while. Pierre rushed over to our table, and my husband"—she swallowed, strangling on the word—"my husband hit him." She choked.

Renne made a fascinated O with her lips. She sucked the circle smaller and whistled. She gulped her drink. "Honey, listen. You never did know much. You haven't learned anything." She giggled. "All husbands do that. Didn't you know? You'll forget it in a week."

"No." Maryse fingered her cheek. "I'm not going to talk about it ever any more. I truly mean that, Renne. It's—more serious than you think. It's—a lot of other things I can never forgive or forget." She talked very slowly and solemnly. Something in her tone gonged through to Renne a new, genuine alarm. Maryse finished: "Please don't ever mention it again, if you're my friend."



"He's been running errands all day."

LIBERTY

Renne nodded, squinting. "I see. What can I do, hon?"

"Got a job for me here?"

"Here? Why, sure, but you could go back to the Chi Chi in a flash. Wiss was crazy about you."

"Could you use me here?"

"I'll call Pete." Her face hardened. "To hell with Pete! You bet we can use you. I do that old marimba routine at midnight and two. The hunk of lard, Josie, gives earlier with what she calls singing. You can go on after my act with a fast tap. O.K.? After Mardi Gras you can get something first class in one of the hotel shows. I could, myself, but I got to stay and watch the till. There's dough in them sots."

Maryse regarded Renne with gratitude and revulsion. She felt lost and gone. Around her was the loneliness that cradles a rocket in space. But she was launched. Ahead lay only the deep, cold interplanetary blue.

MARYSE asked slowly, "Do you love Pete?"

Renne's face jelled into a pout, relaxed. She gave Maryse a weary smile.

"It's a tough life, baby. You do the best you can. We're putting money in the sock and some day I can get fat and lie in the sun."

"You were right, Renne. You remember when you told me men were made to be used by women? I didn't think so then, but I see now you were right. That's my motto from now on."

Renne was thoughtful. She cocked her head to one side, eying Maryse.

"Honey, haven't you got some kinfolks here in town? Seems to me you said you had, one time."

"They're dead. The only ones I know about were a great-aunt and -uncle. They were old as the hills when my mother and father left here. They couldn't be still alive."

"Whyn't you look 'em up?" Renne took a long swallow from her glass, finishing the drink. She rose. "Look 'em up anyhow. You're low tonight. You're in the mood to do something crazy. Tomorrow things may seem different. Come spend the night with us and see if you can't rustle up some kinfolks tomorrow. You said there used to be a big family. Know the address where your aunt and uncle lived?"

Maryse shrugged. "No good. They're dead."

Feet clattered in the passageway and Pete stood there scowling. His pink shirt bulged at the belt. He had the face of a dissipated cherub. His eyes were large and liquid, angry now.

"What's this? Don't you know you can't run off and leave your customers? How do you expect me to handle that mob alone?" Then, surprisingly, his thick lips pouted and he sighed. "All right! Just ruin the business and see if I care. See if I care!"

Renne giggled and crossed to him.

She patted his shoulder. He seemed on the verge of tears.

"Take it easy, Pete. Take it easy. This is Maryse Ducros. She used to room with me in New York. She's coming to the apartment for a few days. Wonderful little trouper. She's going in our show."

Fretfully he inspected Maryse. "Our show? Too much show now—and no good. People come to drink. They don't care nothing about any show, not in Mardi Gras they don't."

"Well," stated Renne decisively, "she's going in ours anyway. Then we're going to get her a big sugar daddy worth a million." She laughed. She was slightly drunk.

Pete's face relaxed. He gave Maryse a sly look. A voice from the bar called faintly, *"Pete!"* He took Renne's arm. "All right. Anything. But come help me with those drunks."

Renne said, "Come on, duck." But Maryse shook her head. "I think I'll rest in here awhile, if you don't mind."

The door closed behind them and the sound of their footsteps echoed loud on concrete. Maryse sat watching the floor, trying painfully to think. Footsteps approached again.

The door opened. It was Pete.

He was grinning.

He walked across to her, took her chin in a fat hand. Suddenly he leaned forward, tilting her face up, and implanted a kiss on her lips. He chuckled.

"We gonna have fun. Good-by now."

He disappeared, banging the door.

Maryse stood immobile, faint and chilled. She moved her hand up and wiped her lips with the sleeve of her coat. Once again she was sure that this was all nightmare; that she would awake and find the world smiling and full of promise again.

She moved out into the squalid areaway. To the left was the back door into the Gargling Pelican; to her right was a narrow passage ending at a wooden door. She walked down the passage. The door gave under her hand.

NOW the rowdy street once more. She walked fast, and when a man spoke to her she grinned sardonically and shook her head.

On impulse at the next corner, she fumbled, lifted the tiny locket on its golden chain from between her breasts. Esplanade Avenue, 222½. She dropped the locket back.

Her mother and father had talked, long ago, of Uncle Rivé and Aunt Cécile. A fragment of dialogue floated back to Maryse: "To think—Rivé would be eighty today!" Of course this shadowy great-aunt and -uncle would have been in their graves for years.

She turned into a wide street with a parkway down the center. It was darker, quieter here; the tinkle of revelry was only a music box grinding faint under the pink uptown sky.

A bulky figure moved toward her out of the dark. The figure clumped along with the universal gait of the policeman. Coming abreast of him, Maryse hesitated, turned.

"Officer."

"What's your trouble?"

"I—why, I just wanted to be sure what street this is."

"Esplanade."

Esplanade!

Nearly breathless with discovery, she asked, "Is there a 222½—and how far is it?"

The policeman said, "Sure you got the number right? You know somebody there?"

"Yes. Well—I don't know. Some relatives of mine *used* to live there. Named de Rivière."

A pause. The cop cleared his throat. He asked, "Old M'sieu de

Rivière and his wife you mean?"

"Yes! Are they still alive?"

For another interval he did not reply. Finally: "They're still alive all right. Have you seen them lately?"

She did not answer that. She cried excitedly, "Which way do they live?"

"Why don't you call on your relatives in the daytime? Excuse me, but—" He made a rotary motion with his index finger at the temple. "They're pretty old, young lady. Kind of eccentric-like."

"I don't care! I want to see them *now*."

The cop exhaled noisily. "O.K., sister. It's the oldest house two blocks up and on the other side of the street. How long since you seen them?"

"I never saw them in my life. I'm so *glad* they're still alive."

"You'll be—surprised." He struck his open palm with his night stick. "I've known that pair for years. They ain't very modern. In fact, they think they're still in the old Creole days—they're plumb nutty, in fact, even if they are relatives of yours. Don't know whether a kid like you ought to call on that pair this time of night. Of course they're harmless, but—"

Maryse didn't hear. "Two blocks up, you say, across the street?"

Her heart pounded at the sight of the ancient house, cupolaed and trimmed with galleries, choked by a yard thick with tropical growth. Why, it had been in this house that the quarrel had occurred back in the lost past. Maryse was stricken with a feeling of recognition, of tenderness toward this old house, this tough symbol of the New Orleans of her imagination and her dream, surviving, tougher than the dream, into the revolting present.

A LIGHT burned in the downstairs front window, feeble through the drapes, lamplight. She walked across the creaking porch and pulled a cracked china bell knob. A mellow tone boomed within. Nothing happened. She had the feeling that the cop had followed her and was watching from somewhere.

She grew frantic for fear she had come just too late—that she would find her great-aunt and -uncle lying dead inside among the echoing silences of a hundred years. She was reaching to pull the bell again when she heard the pad of soft footsteps.

The door opened and the most wrinkled woman's face she had ever seen peered at her from beneath a candle held high. The face was long, strong-nosed, the color of fine cowhide. Above it an elaborate lace cap enclosed a pile of hair. A shawl was wound about the thin throat.

"Maryse?"

The voice was faint and delicate as remembered music.

"Yes. I—"

"Come in. We knew you would come back."

The conclusion of this story will appear next week.

ON THE BEAM

What's cookin' in the personal-plane field? Nothing revolutionary, no mass production—so far as one sales manager can see

BY WAYNE PARRISH

THE sales manager of one of the leading airplane manufacturers doesn't believe there is going to be anything revolutionary in personal airplanes in the near future. He's Gordon C. Sleeper, sales manager of the personal-plane division of Republic Aviation Corporation, which is building the Seabee amphibian.

"I believe that better planes are in early prospect," he said in a recent talk to state aviation officials, "but they are not revolutionary and there is little evidence that they will be available in quantity soon.

In the first place, some of the companies offering new models of excellent characteristics will be found to have neither the experience, the facilities, nor the money to put them in large production.

"Of the few companies from which large production might be expected, very few have to date shown any serious interest in personal-plane development; or if they have, they appear to be committed to conventional designs which, although definite improvements, are not easily susceptible to mass production, and whose prices are currently, at least, no serious threat to the general market."

Trends in the personal-plane field, he says, are toward all-metal construction, four-passenger planes, more powerful engines, retractable landing gears, flaps, new types of propellers, better instruments, and new safety devices. Radio is becoming a must in all aircraft.

To Try Joint Terminal Services

So congested are the passenger and loading facilities at busy airports that the air lines now propose to conduct experiments in consolidation of terminal services at several leading cities.

Up to now the municipalities have provided terminals for all to use, but some cities have been finding the job too big for them. The Air Transport Association, to which all air lines belong, is setting up a terminal corporation to try out various schemes of joint services. If the experiments are successful, it is probable that the corporation will take over passenger terminals wherever the cities wish to unload the burden.

On the new corporation's board of directors are C. R. Smith, chairman of the board of American Airlines; Ray W. Ireland, executive v. p. of United Air Lines; T. E. Braniff, president of Braniff International Airways; C. Bedell Monro, president of Capital Airlines-PCA; C. E. Woolman, president of Delta Air Lines; Paul H. Brattain, 1st v. p. of Eastern Air Lines; A. M. Jens, Jr., of Trans-World Airline; and Emory S. Land and Robert Ramspeck, president and executive v. p. of the Air Transport Association.

"Hq. CAF"—That's a Joke, Son!

Yankees from up North get quite a start when they land at the airport at New Bern, North Carolina. Flying in the breeze is the Confederate flag, and a big sign which reads "Headquarters, Confederate Air Force."

It seems that some returning veterans decided to establish a fixed-base operations, selling airplanes and giving flight instruction. They couldn't think of a better name for their company, so they dug up an old flag and put Confederate insignia on the caps of all their employees.

Whenever a student pilot successfully solos, he or she is formally awarded with considerable ceremony a commission as "colonel" in the "Confederate Air Force."

"Aerial Jack-of-all-trades" is the versatile Consolidated Vultee L-13, in production at San Diego. It has folding wings, is America's first all-metal liaison plane.

PEACE—OR HELL ON EARTH

Continued from Page 13

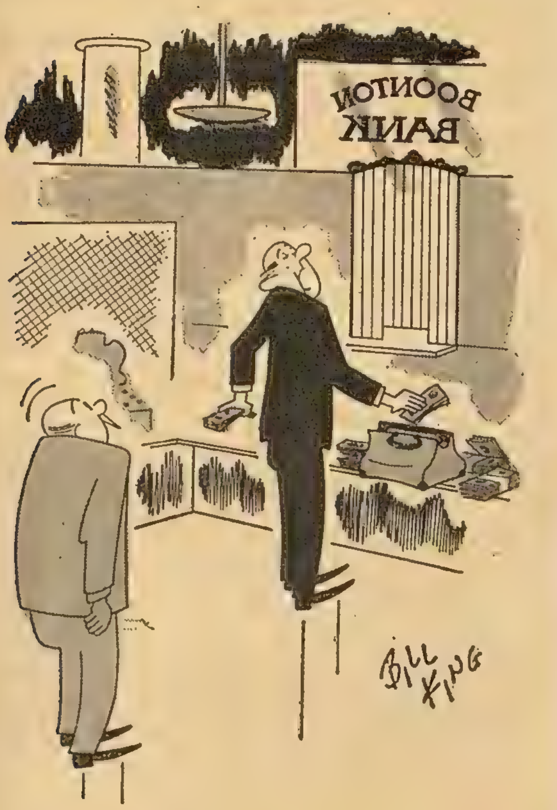
onate our super-bomb fifteen miles in the air. Certainly it would not go off much lower than that for the best results, and probably it would not be much higher. Let's settle on fifteen miles and make a few guesses at what would be likely to happen.

The moment we start to think about it, we enter a mad world of inconceivable results. This, we suddenly realize, is a new weapon, not just a big A-bomb. It is an entirely different thing. The only way to enter this insane world is by a horrible game of make-believe. Let us be entirely vicious and pretend that some fair weekday morning a super-bomb of this type suddenly detonates fifteen miles above the northern edge of the city of Newark, New Jersey. (Why Newark, and not New York? You will see.)

THERE would be no noise worth mentioning. A little rumble, perhaps, but since everyone close enough to hear it would be dead, the noise wouldn't amount to anything to tell about. But doesn't it seem strange that the A-bomb makes a noise like a thousand thunders, and a super-A-bomb makes almost no noise at all?

The answer lies in the height at which the bomb is detonated. Noise is carried by air. Fifteen miles above the ground there is practically no air. What is left is so thin that it will not carry a great noise. Hence the bomb goes off almost soundlessly. It is the greatest explosion in the world, bursting in horrible silence.

And if that is not fantastic enough, consider this: There is no blast. For blast, too, is carried by air, and when


BOONTON BANK
BILL KING

"I'm embezzling. Why?"

LIBERTY

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The American Distilling Company Inc.
BURTON'S
EXCELLENT FINE FLAVORED DISTILLED LONDON DRY GIN.
DISTILLED LONDON DRY GIN
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Careful selection of ingredients and scientific distillation insures uniformity and excellence of this fine flavored gin. A product of the American Distilling Company whose name on each package has represented the high standard of merchandise for over half a century
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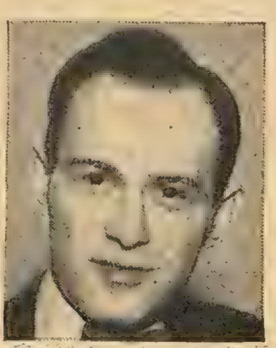
JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

WYLER OF HOLLYWOOD

William Wyler's most prized possessions are a fiddle, a plaster figurine, and a red ribbon. The fiddle dates back to boyhood. He wanted to become a musician, but his Swiss father sent him to Paris to study business. He was slated to return to Alsace-Lorraine to take over the dry-goods shop there, when "Uncle" Carl Laemmle offered him a job in America. So he ended up in Hollywood and started as a prop boy. The plaster figurine, which proves his success there, represents the 1942 Academy Award he won for directing Mrs. Miniver. The ribbon is the American Legion of Merit, awarded to Lieutenant Colonel Wyler for his work with the Army Air Forces (he turned out Memphis Belle and Thunderbolt). He liked that. "Airplanes can't argue as actresses do," he says. Mr. Wyler tells how he feels about movies in ESCAPE TO REALITY on page 17 this week.

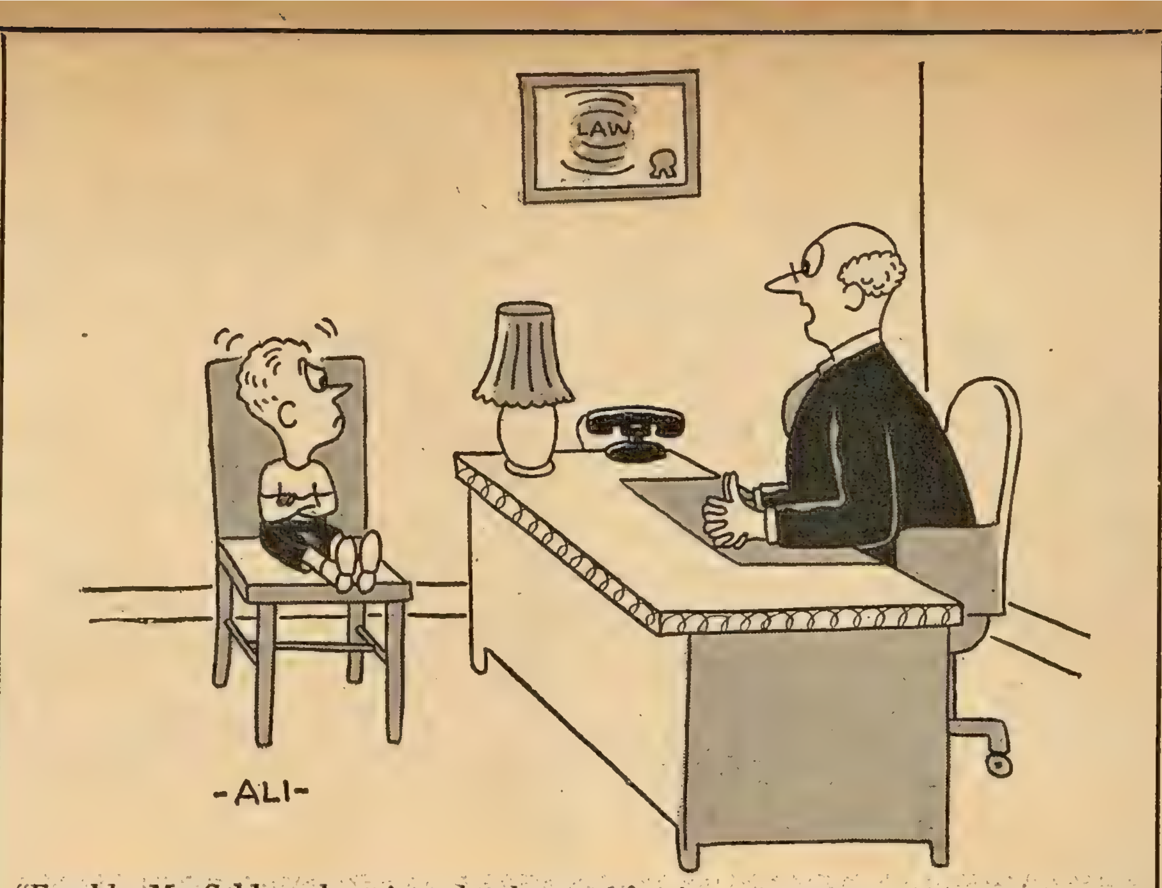
SCIENCE EXPERT



Stephen White was made science writer for the New York Herald Tribune more or less simultaneously with the bursting of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima. It came about by a simple process of selection: the city editor looked around and shouted, "Hey, you!" Since then Mr. White has devoted more time to annoying scientists and less to playing contract bridge, a hobby which used to net him an embarrassing amount of silver. Before he became a science expert, White was a Bostonian, a Harvard graduate, and a newspaperman with the Boston Herald. His article on the super-A-bomb, PEACE—OR HELL ON EARTH, appears on page 12 in this week's issue.

NEXT WEEK

F. D. R.'s BIGGEST FIGHT: The stirring inside story of Franklin D. Roosevelt's battle with paralysis is one of the most exciting article scoops Liberty has had in years. The first of three installments by Alden Hatch tells you things few people ever knew about our late President. . . . Every day, 25,000,000 meteorites come screaming earthward. Roscoe Fleming tells why they don't destroy us in BOMBS FROM THE BLUE. . . . What goes on between the boss and his pretty secretary? Bea Bolen gives you the surprising low-down in A PRIVATE SECRETARY TELLS ALL. . . . Liberty's Book Condensation, FEAR NO MORE, by Leslie Edgley, is the spine-chilling story of a mysterious errand, a deadly murder trap, and a girl's frightening secret.



"Frankly, Mr. Seldon, there is no legal way of forcing an increase in your allowance."
LIBERTY

no air exists to carry the shock wave, there is simply no shock. On the ground below, nothing would be knocked over. So far as blast is concerned, not a leaf would stir. (But this is foolish, for there would be no leaves, as we shall see in a moment.)

There will be practically no radioactivity. A bomb of this great size will be equivalent to millions of tons of radium, but detonated so high, it will disperse over a tremendous area. In any one place it is unlikely that it will do considerable damage—a few areas may be stricken, but the whims of meteorology will select them and decide the amount of damage.

This grows confusing. No sound, no blast, no radioactivity. No buildings smashed to the ground, no steel rails twisted. Simply a silent, shockless explosion high in the air. What, then, does our super-bomb have to make it so horrible? The answer is frightening. It has, in terrifying amounts, the most venomous weapon the world knows, and the oldest—heat.

Heat, and of course light. Postpone the thought of the heat for a moment and think of the light alone. This bomb would have burst over Newark. A tiny fraction of a second later, the people of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 400 miles away, would see a new sun on the eastern horizon and feel a gentle warmth. This sun would be five times as great as the sun to which the good people of Pittsburgh are accustomed—it would hang on the horizon for a moment and then burst into streams of flashing meteors. Buffalo, too, would see this terrible new sun in the east; Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia, would see it to the north, and far out at sea mariners would watch it burst on the western horizon.

At Washington, Scranton, Hartford, and Boston the burst of light would be higher in the sky, and those who were unlucky enough to see it directly would be blind for hours afterward. At Philadelphia and New Haven they might be blinded for life by the violence of the light, almost directly overhead now. In Newark the brightness of the light would not matter very much. There would be few people left alive to worry about it.

For heat does not need air to carry it. There is little air between us and the sun, but we feel the heat strongly enough, and if we stay in it our skin burns. And this is not the heat of the sun. This is three times hotter than the temperature in the center of the sun, and it is only a few miles away. From the center of the bomb this great heat comes pouring out, smashing through the air at the speed of light, doing its work when it reaches matter in its path. It passes in a fraction of a second, but in that time it has done its work.

Under this violent heat, Newark bursts into flames. It is not a fire; it is almost an explosion. Newark will be leveled. There will be no one alive. Clothes catch fire, exposed skin burns away, dying people are trapped in burning buildings. The heat of the bomb will not bring buildings to the ground, but the heat of the fires started by the bomb will do that quickly. There will, of course, be no point in trying to fight such a fire. In any case, there will be no one to fight it.

The ring of cities around Newark—Jersey City, Hoboken, Elizabeth, Passaic, the Oranges—will burn quite as merrily. There will be survivors here—people who were well sheltered at the moment the burst of heat passed over. How long they will survive is another matter. There is nowhere to run to—mile after mile of fire surrounds them. Buildings burn and topple, gasoline explodes around them, the great gas tanks burst with furious violence. This is what hell is.

Across the Hudson River in Manhattan there will be survivors. This burst of heat travels in a straight line and passes quickly. There is still enough of it to char a man who is in the open, but under an awning on the terrace of a swank apartment he will be safe. The awning will burst into flames and so, in a moment, will the apartment. The man will be safe —his only problem will be to get out of his burning building, make his way through flaming streets, and win to safety. A million other people will be trying to do the same—he may have trouble.

At the end of a few hours the fire will have done its worst in Manhattan and in Queens and Brooklyn. There will be no city left, only death and destruction. Buildings will be standing, but they will be no more than empty shells. How many people will die in New York? Two million, three million, six million. Set your own figure. When it becomes that large, it has no real meaning. Add in those who will die in Paterson, Linden, and the other New Jersey cities that were on the periphery. Our bomb has destroyed, in a few unimaginable minutes, the great industrial heart of America.

(You see now why we had the bomb drop over Newark. No point in dropping it over mid-Manhattan, and wasting its power on rural Long Island.)

THE flash of heat will pass over Yonkers and Coney Island and the Rockaways. But these are more than fifteen miles away from the center. It will start a few fires, but they will not be serious fires. A few burning areas, no more.

But wait. Yonkers can fight one fire, or two, or perhaps five. To fight more fires than that, New York must be called upon for help. There will be no help from New York this time. Who will control these fires?

There will be winds of gale force sweeping out of the heart of the burning area. This hurricane will not make the fires in Yonkers any easier to fight. And will the New York City fires stay where they are, or will [illegible] spread northward, unfought, [illegible]trolled, finally uncontrollable? [illegible]nd what does Yonkers plan to do with the stampede of survivors from New York, burned, injured, dying along the roads, fighting tomorrow for food and shelter?

There is no point in going on. Picture the results for yourself. Where will the fires finally die away? Who knows? The experts only shrug their shoulders. We have taken this story already far out of the bounds of human conception. How can mankind, which has seen only such minor fires as the Chicago fire, pretend to know what the whole unleashed fury of fire can do?

Turn aside for a moment to think of Iowa or Nebraska late in the summer, when the corn and wheat crops are ready for harvest. Drop, in your imagination, one of our super-bombs there. What will that fire do, where will that fire spread, when will that fire end? The forests in the Northwest, too—they might make a target.

SPECIAL 15¢
STRICTLY FRESH
2 LBS 25¢
Fred Balk

"What's the breakfast food of *ex*-champions?"

LIBERTY

Now, back to sanity. This has been a picture, dictated by the men who made the A-bomb, of what might happen. As a picture, it might be considerably wrong. The area of immediate damage was set at about 600 square miles, and that is a guess that should not be too far wrong. But no man knows accurately how much of the bomb's energy—and particularly its ultra-violet energy—would be soaked up by the air as it passed toward the earth. No man knows very much about the behavior of matter under sudden bursts of incredible heat. Some of the men to whom I talked scaled the picture down to 300 square miles. Others scaled it up to 1,200 square miles.

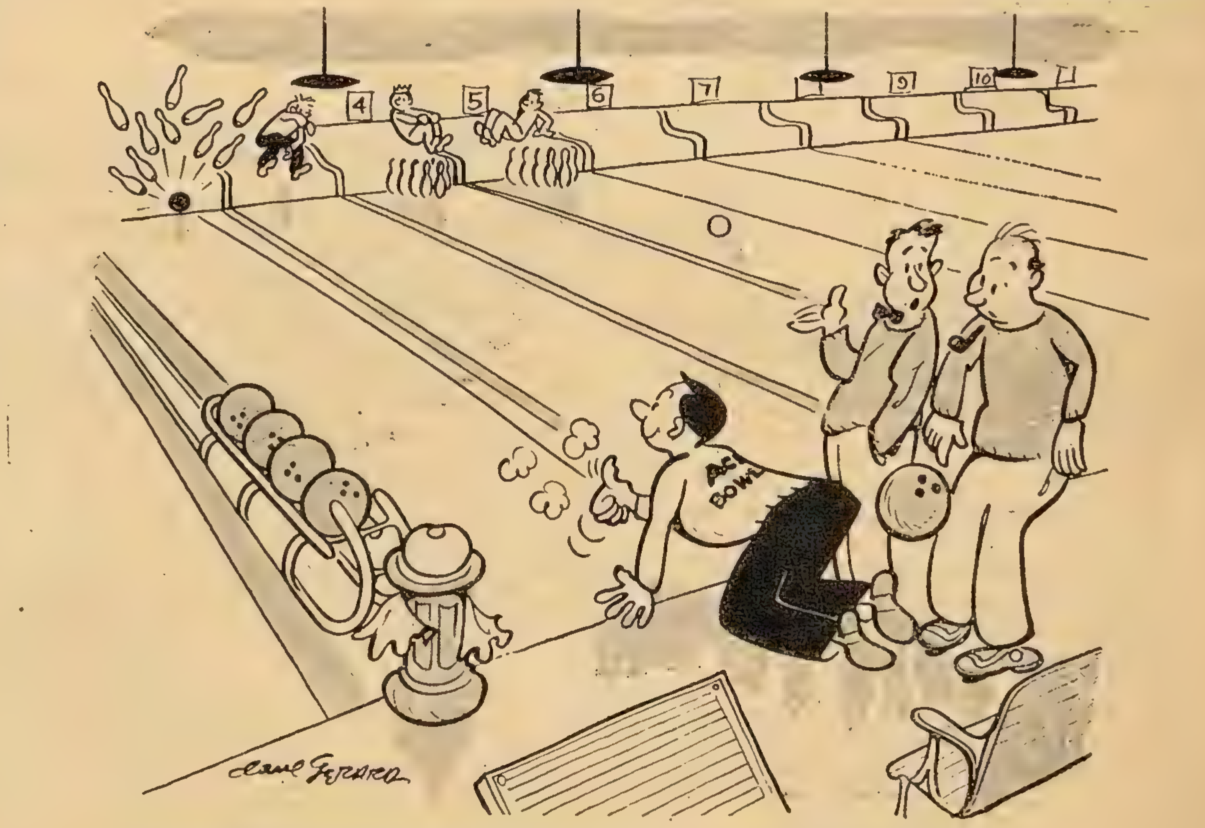
The important thing is that the destruction, in any of those cases, is too great to be borne. The people of the United States, and of the world, must make up their minds that such things cannot be allowed to happen, and must let nothing stand in the way of preventing them. It is not a thing that should be done—it is a thing that must be done.

How this is to be accomplished is something else again. If the world unanimously wants it done, it automatically has been done. If things are allowed to drift, the super-bomb will come just as inevitably as the A-bomb came, and it will be used just as inevitably as the A-bomb was used.

Groups of statesmen gathered together as the United Nations cannot do it alone. They can make rules, and set up procedures, and try earnestly—as indeed they are trying—to control the horrible weapons the last few years have spawned. But it is the people who will decide, not the statesmen. It is the people who must obey the rules, when the rules are laid down.

Super-A-bombs, super-rockets, super-bacteriological warfare, super-fire bombs, super-blockbusters —man can make them all. He can manufacture his own destruction. There is no escape unless he realizes, quickly, that he must not do any such thing.

THE END



Advertisement

"He used to be a marbles champ, but now he eats Wheaties!"

Knuckle down to a better breakfast—including plenty of milk, fruit, and Wheaties, famous "Breakfast of Champions." Grand nourishment in Wheaties. And swell nut-sweet flavor. *Yes,* Wheaties are *so good* they're America's favorite whole wheat flakes. *You better try 'em!*

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOW MAKES

Continued from Page 17

the least rewarded among the nation's most responsible workers, the schoolteachers, whose weekly salaries are not more than $30 on a national average.

At the bottom of the scale you will find one out of every five families, 9,300,000 of them, with incomes below $1,000 a year, or less than the $20 a week that unemployed men and women on relief are able to draw as compensation in a good many states.

But then take a look at the income tax the various groups are paying as their contribution to the world's costliest government. The tax rates prevailing at present are lessening the inequality of income distribution much more than they ever did before the war.

Take the upper 600 or 700 families who had incomes of more than $300,000 last year. Their average weekly earnings of almost $12,000 were slashed almost nine tenths by income-tax payments. The 5,000-odd families in the $100,000 to $300,000 category had to surrender to the Treasury 75 per cent of their incomes. The 15,000 families in the President's bracket of $50,000 to $100,000 were taxed two thirds of their incomes. Each of them paid as much as eighty-one families did in the $3,000 to $5,000 group, where taxes were about 15 per cent; or as much as 1,300 families in the "below $3,000 bracket," who were taxed about 2 per cent on an average.

Finally, don't forget that the per capita national income, measured in stable prices, is rising from decade to decade, benefiting every group of society.

THE END

SEE YOUR NEAREST DEALER

Would you like a motorcar?
New golf balls to help break par?
See your nearest dealer.

Latest thing in radios?
Gobs and gobs of nylon hose?
See your nearest dealer.

Do you want a nice new home?
Motorboat to sail the foam?
See your nearest dealer.

New machine to wash your duds?
Shiny stove to cook your spuds?
See your nearest dealer—

And then, my friend, if you insist,
He'll put your name down on the list!
—*Loyd Rosenfield.*

Clothes Clinic

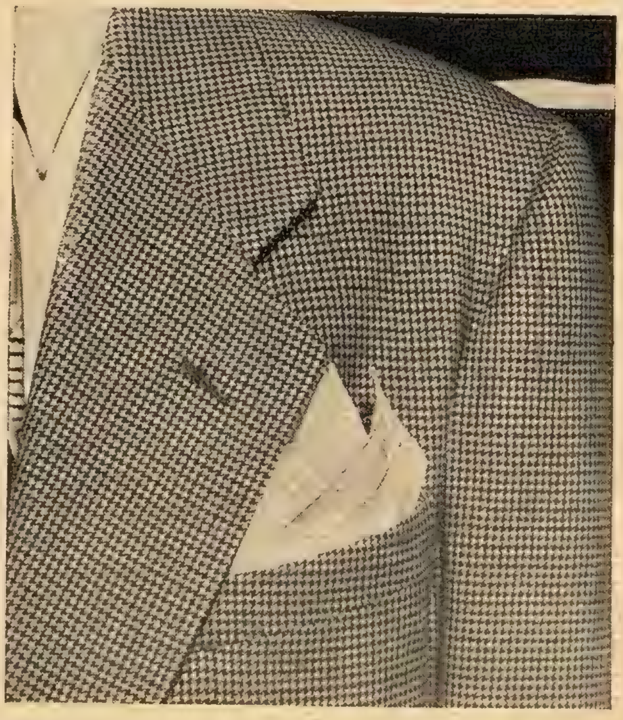
By P. B. Juster

Noted Men's Style Authority

Ten Bas

WITH the start of the New Year, resolve constantly to look your best, for, whether you realize it or not, you are judged—as you judge others—by appearance. The following primary rules of good dress will be of help to you.

Your clothes should never startle anyone when you come into a room. (See Rule No. 1.)



The handkerchief should be placed in the breast pocket in a casual manner, avoiding folded napkin effect. Here's how: 1. Grasp handkerchief in center and shake out. 2. Fold handkerchief in half. 3. Slide handkerchief into pocket with points of it casually protruding.

RULES T

1. Don't appear overdressed
gaudy. On entering a room, the imp
sion to make is a *general* impressi
so that your friends remember
general good appearance
particular part of your
2. Keep shirts, collar
chiefs immaculate. With clea
smart accessories you can mak
old ensemble appear newer.
3. Brush your clothes—even w
they're old. It's distressing to see g
clothes carelessly treated and spot
Frequent good brushings will put
in your clothes and remove loose
that may end up as a spot.
4. Rest your clothes. Just like pe
they get tired and need a rest
much better to alternate two
than to wear each for a long per
5. Never be conscious of your clot
Mold them to your activities so
don't intrude but become a pa
your whole appearance.

Rules of Good Dress

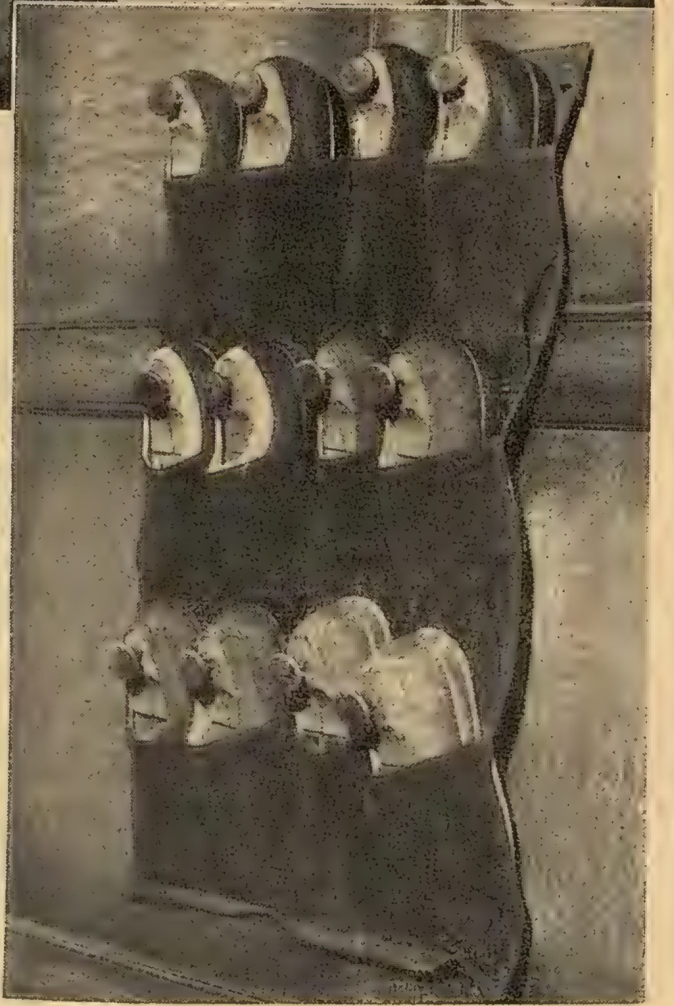
Casual clothes aren't the clothes to wear when you're out for dinner. (Rule No. 8.)

ESS BY

e right materials and colors can do
ers for you and your appearance.
earn the art of getting into your
es carefully and wearing them with
. The haphazard way in which
ents are put on and the rip-pull-
tug manner in which they are taken
e ruined many a man's wardrobe
head of time.

ess properly for the occasion.
should be unnecessary to mention
rule, but it's still vitally important:
your hair combed, be clean shaven,
ake sure your hands are clean—not
sarily manicured, but well-cared-for.
est-tailored suit looks ill on an un-
man.

fty per cent of your appearance is
d by the clothes you wear, and
the first impression becomes a last-
ne. So it's imperative that your
should always be in good taste.
to give the impression you wish to



Too little time and attention are given to the care of shoes. These hints will help: 1. Change your shoes every day. 2. Use shoe trees. 3. And here's a handy gadget that conserves space in the closet and keeps your shoes in order.

"Help me *walk* again..."

FIGHT INFANTILE PARALYSIS

Join the
MARCH OF DIMES

Your dimes at work the year round

They pay for FULL COST OF CARE, regardless of time, for any infantile paralysis victim who may require it, irrespective of age, race, creed or color.

They buy expensive EQUIPMENT, such as iron lungs, Hubbard tanks and hot pack machines, and furnish wool for packs.

They supply front-line SHOCK TROOPS, such as doctors, physical therapists, epidemiologists, nurses, etc., in epidemic-stricken areas to fight the disease. These remain on the scene for the duration of the epidemic.

They finance RESEARCH in hundreds of laboratories and medical schools into the cause and treatment of infantile paralysis. This takes millions of dollars annually and it is HERE that the final battle will be won.

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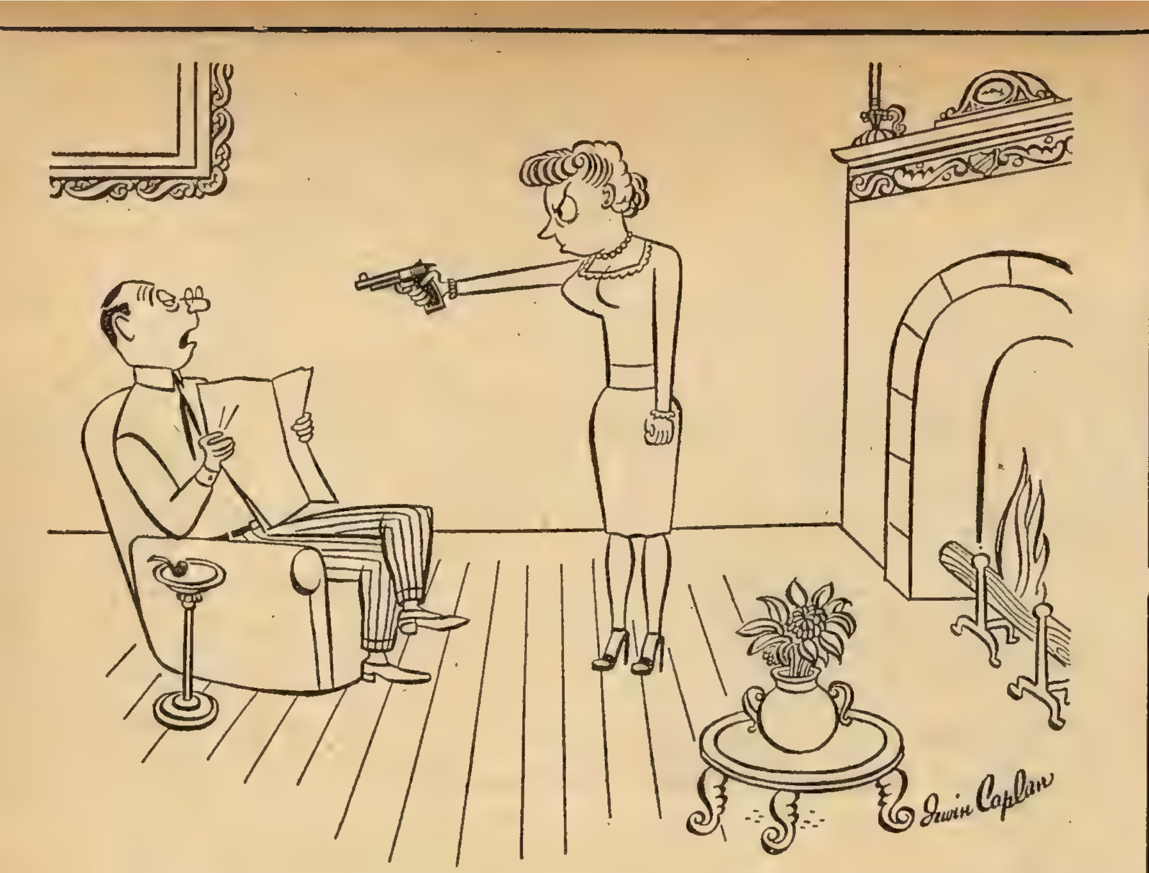

"For heaven's sake, dear, do you want to wake the children?"

LIBERTY

THE GIRL WHO COULDN'T SAY "NO"

Continued from Page 27

as foreign as if he had suddenly placed one of the red roses between his teeth and tossed his head at her.

But because she had become used to saying it, she said again, "Yes?"

"So," said Mr. Mayberry, "I think it might be well, Miss Lane—Olga, if I may call you that?" He bent his head questioningly.

"Of course," murmured Olga.

"Well, then," said Mr. Mayberry, "I think it might be well, Olga, if you do not attempt to go on alone—if," he said again, and he stood up, shaking his knees a little to release his trouser legs, and Olga stood up politely too, "you do not go on alone."

"Yes?" said Olga. This was, she thought, becoming a most queer conversation. Exactly where she would be going alone, and why there would be pitfalls (which she pictured vaguely as some sort of holes in the ground—gopher holes maybe?), she couldn't imagine.

But Mr. Mayberry seemed to be quite happy about it. He came over now and smiled, so broadly that for a moment Olga was taken aback, for she hadn't realized that Mr. Mayberry's teeth were false and that they clicked a little when he talked.

HE came so close to her that for a moment she had the wild idea that he was drunk maybe until she remembered that Mr. Mayberry was the sole male attendant at the W.C.T.U. meetings.

He came so very close that Olga attempted to step back, but since she had neglected to move away from her chair, it merely caused her to sit down rather suddenly.

This odd situation seemed not to bother Mr. Mayberry at all. Instead, he seemed to take it as an extra cause for pleasure, and he smiled a little more broadly and clicked his teeth a little more fervently.

"You can't imagine how happy you have made me, Miss—Olga," he said. He reached down and picked up Olga's hand and pressed it. Since his hand was a bit clammy, Olga found herself instinctively pulling away, and then she remembered her manners.

"I shall, of course," he said, "give you a ring. Next week."

Since by this time he had moved away slightly, Olga managed to get to her feet and wipe her hand surreptitiously upon her handkerchief. His last statement had no more meaning for her than anything else he had said. Why he would want to give her a ring next week she had no idea. Certainly he didn't need to telephone her about anything—if he had anything to say, he should say it now.

"Of course," she said, and smiled at him. "That will be fine." This time she moved away and out into the open. If Mr. Mayberry lost his balance or sense of direction, she wanted some place to retire to safer than a chair with arms.

"You are," said Mr. Mayberry, "a very lovely girl."

This was the second time that Olga had found herself described as being lovely by men who up until now had apparently not even known that she existed, and she had a very sudden and almost compelling desire to go and look into the mirror. *Perhaps,* she thought, amazed—*perhaps something has happened to me! Perhaps I actually have changed!*

"I have never really liked schoolteaching," Mr. Mayberry remarked with what seemed to Olga complete irrelevance. "It is a very mean and poor-paying job. What I would really like to do is to travel. With, of course," he smiled and clicked his teeth at her, "a lovely companion."

"Why, yes," she said automatically.

"Then," said Mr. Mayberry, "I shall see you next week—Monday night, say." With which statement he made another little bow to Olga and left.

Olga went to the mirror over the mantel and stared at her reflection. There was the same plain brown hair that Grandma had said was just hair-colored hair—Olga reached up and loosened it a little, and a few curls came out inquiringly about her temples—and the same blue eyes, and the same mouth. She smiled—the smile, she thought, was nice. Maybe she *was* beautiful! Maybe she *was* a lovely young girl!

In which case, she thought excitedly, she knew exactly what she would do! She would walk down to the filling station and smile at Tommy Baker. If Arthur Hammer thought she was a lovely young girl, and Mr. Mayberry thought she was a lovely young girl—why, maybe Tommy might think so too! He might even ask her for a date!

The thought was so pleasant that Olga smiled again at her reflection and picked up one of the red roses Mr. Mayberry had left and lifted it to her hair. But the rose loosened its petals and showered her with them, and the effect was altogether so delightful that Olga laughed. She laughed out loud and then turned and ran up the stairs.

She put on her new dress then, which was black, of course, with long sleeves and a high neck with a prim round collar. And then, because, after all, it was summer, she suddenly got out the scissors and cut them off—the sleeves and the collar both. And the effect, she thought, was really very good.

IT was a beautiful day, and for three blocks down the street Olga felt wonderful. Then she began to feel doubtful. She began to feel plain and awkward and surely the most untalented girl in the world.

And if it had not been that Tommy Baker was standing in front of the filling station, she would no doubt have gone right on by.

But Tommy was there. A car had just driven away. He was just standing there with an oilcan in his hand. And the sun was making little shining waves out of his hair and stroking his brown arms with gold.

"Hello," said Olga shyly, and even as she spoke she wished she hadn't come, for Grandma had always said that the worst thing in the world was a forward woman.

"Why, hello, Olga," said Tommy. Usually Tommy smiled broadly when he saw Olga, but now he just looked at her. He looked as if he were seeing her a long way off.

Because Tommy looked so serious, she felt even more confused. "I—I was just dropping by," she said.

"I'm glad you did," said Tommy. He set the oilcan down carefully. "You look awfully nice today."

Olga flushed a little. Perhaps it was true, then! She was pretty!

"You look nice too, Tommy," she said, and then flushed again because Tommy didn't say anything. He didn't even smile at her. He just stood there looking thoughtful.

"YOUR grandmother was a fine woman, Olga," he said.

"Why, yes," said Olga.

"And she didn't like dirty things and noisy things," said Tommy, "like filling stations and people who work in them. She liked everything neat and clean."

"Why, yes," said Olga. Tommy was right. That was Grandma all right.

"Now if you didn't have any way of looking out for yourself," said Tommy, "things might be different. Then it might be all right for you to live in a cheap little apartment and work hard every day. But you don't have to live that way. You have means to live nicely now."

"Yes," said Olga doubtfully. She couldn't imagine living any other way than she always had. She had always worked hard every day to please Grandma.

"You could even travel," said Tommy. "You could go to wonderful places and meet wonderful people—people—men with money and fine educations."

"I guess so," said Olga. She frowned a little. Mr. Mayberry had mentioned travel, too. Maybe she ought to go places and meet people. Only somehow she always felt so shy with strangers. Somehow she would rather stay here, even if she never saw anybody but Tommy driving by and waving to her.

"You wouldn't want to ruin your life, would you, Olga?" Tommy said now, and he looked at her very earnestly, "after all your grandmother has done for you? You would want to live in a nice house and meet nice people, wouldn't you?"

"Yes," said Olga. But even though "Yes" seemed the right answer here, the one that Tommy expected, she didn't feel happy about it.

And just then a car came up and a man leaned his head out of the window and said briskly, "Fill 'er up," and Tommy looked at Olga a little sadly and said, "Excuse me," and went off.

After a moment Olga turned and went slowly on home. She had been wrong, after all. She was still a very plain girl with hair-colored hair and no new dress would ever make any difference as to how she looked to Tommy Baker.

The red rose petals still lay on

***********★***********

A politician is a fellow who works his gums at election time and gums the works afterward.—*"Buster" Rothman.*

****

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the rug, and just looking at them made Olga want to cry. She cried until she couldn't cry any more, until she felt dry and empty inside.

After that she changed her dress for an old blue one with long sleeves and went to the grocery store.

THE store was a little crowded today, and Olga was surprised that Mr. Sanders, the proprietor himself, put down the sack of potatoes he was weighing and came right over to wait on her.

"And how are you today, Miss Lane?" he said, rubbing his fat hands together. "I have saved a very nice steak for you. The nicest steak in the house, I said, for Miss Lane."

Olga looked at Mr. Sanders in surprise. Mr. Sanders had never been particularly affable before, not even to Grandma. Usually whenever Olga or Grandma came in, he pretended he was very busy with something else.

But now he seemed delighted to see Olga. "And here's some nice Delicious apples that just came in." He held out two big red apples, and Olga took them, for it seemed to be the thing to do.

"Thank you," she said. Were they gifts, she wondered, or was he making a sale? Salespeople, she knew, were very clever, and lots of times you found yourself buying things you didn't want. Grandma said you always had to be on the watch all the time.

"I know what a wonderful homemaker you are," said Mr. Sanders. "So neat. So economical." He put his plump white fingers over Olga's hand on the counter and pressed it lightly. "Ah, how I've missed a woman in the home!" Mr. Sanders sighed a little, a procedure that shook his two chins slightly. "I have been, you know," he said, and he pressed Olga's hand again, "alone now with my dear children for three years."

"Yes," said Olga. Everybody had said—well, at least Grandma had said—Mrs. Sanders had been a very smart woman, really, to get away from Mr. Sanders, even if she had to die. Grandma said that Mr. Sanders counted both sides of every penny that came into the store. Even Mr. Sanders' three children, as fat as they were, looked as if they counted things too.

"People shouldn't live alone," said Mr. Sanders now. His eyes were little and pale blue and they looked almost buried in Mr. Sanders' fat round face.

"Yes," said Olga vaguely. It seemed to her that Mr. Sanders was taking a very odd route if he meant just to sell her a bushel of apples.

Mr. Sanders bent farther over the counter and pressed her hand so hard that Olga tried to pull it away. "I knew you would feel like that," he said. "I told myself this morning that all I had to do was to speak to you."

THE MOURNING AFTER

There's an unpleasant taste in your mouth,
Your reflexes cringe at each sound,
Your eyes are still heavy with sleep
As you grope toward the bus, office-bound.

You're through with carousing at dusk,
And tottering home before light;
But most aggravating of all,
You went to bed early *last night!*

—Helen Gorn Sutin.

Olga struggled to free her hand, and finally left it there. Mr. Sanders was speaking very oddly, she thought.

"I just want a few things," she said now. "Not very much."

"Of course," he said, and he smirked at her and lowered his voice. It was the first time that Olga had ever seen Mr. Sanders come even near a smile, and it startled her. When he smirked, his eyes hid even farther in his cheeks and his ears twitched a little and stood out. "Of course," he said hoarsely, "and I feel the same way. Just a few necessities, I say, like food, and the rest goes back into the business. And the house is really in very good condition, and you'll love the children."

By now Mr. Sanders had leaned so far over the counter that Olga was beginning to be a little frightened. She pulled her hand suddenly loose, picked up her basket, and ran. She didn't slow down until she was halfway down the block. The day, she thought, was getting worse and worse. Now Mr. Sanders seemed to think that she was going to keep house for him. The idea of keeping house for Mr. Sanders and his three fat children appalled her. She wished she knew what to do.

And then she had an idea. She would call Uncle Hiram in Arkansas and ask him to come over and advise her.

She hurried right home and put in a long-distance telephone call for Uncle Hiram. She could hardly wait to hear his nice comfortable deep voice over the wire.

"Why, of course I'll come over, honey," he said. "Tomorrow. But what's the matter? I was just over a couple of weeks ago, and everything seemed all right then."

TOMORROW NEVER COMES

I'm weary of reading
In pamphlet and book
Of the House of Tomorrow.
Wherever I look
Are glittering blueprints
I'd skitter away
For one vacant Tumble-Down
Shack of Today!

—Ethel Jacobson.

"I know," said Olga and her voice wavered in spite of herself, "but I've seemed to get everything all mixed up. Right now it seems that I've agreed to put in a hardware store and take a trip around the world and be a housekeeper for a fat old man with three children."

There was a pause, and then Uncle Hiram said firmly, "You stay right there. I'll take the midnight train and be over tomorrow morning."

UNCLE HIRAM was there right after breakfast.

"Now," he said briskly, after he had kissed Olga and ruffled up her hair a little and knocked some ashes from his pipe on the floor, "what's all this about?"

Olga told him. She told him everything, even including Tommy Baker who used to wave to her and now was so formal he didn't even smile. And she told him about Mr. Mayberry's hands being clammy and Arthur's Adam's apple, and Mr. Sanders' fat chins.

When she got through, Uncle Hiram took off his glasses and wiped them carefully, and it looked to Olga as if he were trying to keep from laughing about something, although she couldn't imagine what. "You are probably the nicest little girl that ever grew up under a stern old woman's thumb. The trouble with you is that you can't say 'no.'"

"Yes," said Olga, and then, at Uncle Hiram's grin, she said, "No," and then they both laughed.

"Do you realize," said Uncle Hiram, and he put his glasses back on and grinned at her again, "that you have gotten yourself engaged to be married to three different men?"

"Oh, no!" said Olga, and she blinked at him in surprise. "I couldn't have." And then she sat forward eagerly. "Tommy Baker?" she said.

"Not Tommy," said Uncle Hiram. "Those three aggressive, eager fortune hunters: Mr. Hammer, Mr. Mayberry, and Mr. Sanders."

"Oh," said Olga sitting back. "I couldn't marry any of them!"

"Well," said Uncle Hiram, and he stared at the pink snapdragons and the shattered red roses thoughtfully, "I think I can do something. When's your birthday, Olga? Next month?"

Olga nodded, surprised. "The sixth," she said. "I'll be twenty-one."

"Well," said Uncle Hiram, and he stood up and lighted his pipe and pulled at it, "I'll tell you what. You just pretend that everything is going to come out just the way you want it to.

"And why don't you put on something pretty—pink and ruffled maybe? And along about three o'clock this afternoon have, say, a pitcher of nice cold lemonade and some cookies handy? I figure it'll take just about six hours for gossip to go from one end of this town to the other."

"You're coming back at three?" said Olga.

"Nothing like lemonade and cookies and a pretty girl in a pink dress," said Uncle Hiram. "Why, I remember—" He leaned over suddenly and kissed Olga on the cheek, and she didn't know why she suddenly felt so wonderful, for Uncle Hiram's kisses were always brisk and tobacco-smelling, but she felt as if everything were all settled and taken care of.

After Uncle Hiram went off down the walk whistling, she went upstairs and hunted up an old pink dress she used to wear in high school.

She took the sleeves out and the collar off, and then, daringly, she decided she might just as well make a midriff dress out of it. She always had wanted to see how she would look in a midriff dress.

It took her the rest of the morning, and when she finished, she felt excited.

Then she loosened her hair and tied a pink ribbon about it. And then she remembered the lemonade Uncle Hiram wanted, and she went downstairs to make it. She made some cookies; and because Grandma wasn't there to tell her not to, she put icing on them—pretty pink icing. Icing on cookies, Grandma had always said, was a downright waste of time and money.

AND at three o'clock there was the doorbell. But oddly enough it wasn't Uncle Hiram at all. It was, surprisingly, Tommy Baker. The sun was shining on his hair in nice crisp waves and stroking his brown arms with gold, and his eyes didn't look at all as if she were a long way off. They looked as if she was right there.

"Hello, Tommy," said Olga breathlessly. "Won't you come in?"

He came in. He came in and stood so close that Olga held her breath. "Your uncle told me," he said.

"Yes?" said Olga. For, no matter what Uncle Hiram had told Tommy, it had been a wonderful idea, she thought.

"He told me about the money," Tommy said. "About it's not being true that you have ten thousand dollars. He said you don't have a penny to your name. That you are alone in the world, without a cent."

"Well, yes," said Olga. For of course she wouldn't have the ten thousand dollars until her twenty-first birthday.

"Then in that case," said Tommy, and because he was so close it seemed perfectly logical that he should put his arms around her—"in that case you need to be taken care of. You need to be looked after."

"Oh, yes!" sighed Olga happily, and when Tommy kissed her, it was a most satisfactory kiss. Most satisfactory.

"I know a nice little apartment," said Tommy after awhile, when there was time, "that won't cost a great deal of money. It will be just right for the two of us. It will mean we'll have to work hard"—he drew away to look at her, and she smiled at him eagerly, for after working hard to please Grandma, it would be wonderful to work hard to please Tommy—"but we'll be very happy. Can we be married right away? Next month?"

"Oh, yes," said Olga. "The fifth." For her birthday wouldn't be until the sixth—she wouldn't be twenty-one and have ten thousand dollars until the sixth.

THE END

TAKE A PIECE OF RED STRING

Continued from Page 23

even find themselves turning a nice shade of apple green from head to toe.

But it is the arthritic himself who comes forth with the most ingenious ideas. Copper is a magical metal to many. A distinguished New York woman editor who was taking the gold-salt treatment from an eminent Arizona specialist, wore copper anklets and said she hadn't had a twinge in ankles or feet since she'd donned them. The remedy of an aged Negro in Columbia, South Carolina, was similar but cheaper: he favored wearing a "shiny penny" on a cord.

Then there's the "daily dose" school. "Ninety per cent of the infected joints are completely cured. Yes, sir. All I did was take a half-gallon glass jar, put two peeled bananas and a few tenpenny nails in it with a quart of water, and then leave the jar in the hot sun for a few days. The nails rust, you know, so you get iron that way, and the bananas make the drink palatable."

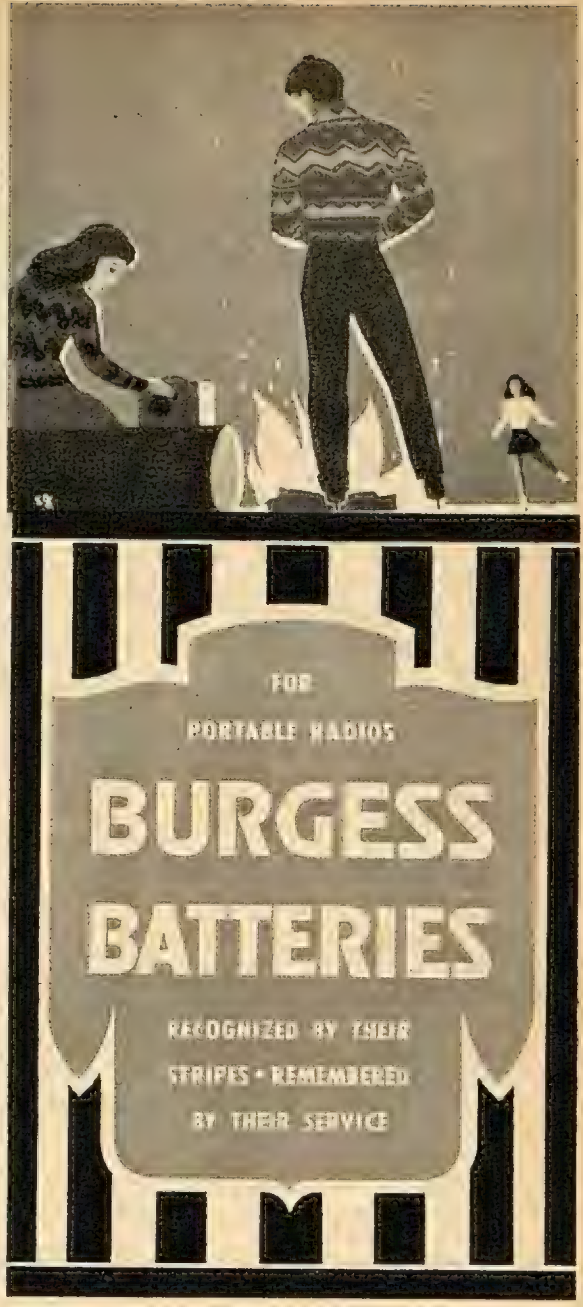
But this testimonial wasn't too convincing, for the speaker was lying in the Arizona sun coated with a half inch of drying mud from neck to toe—mud from a "famous medicinal mud spring where the arthritic can acquire freedom from pain."

Another patient had practically cured himself by eating a dozen lemons a day; but the one next to him in the wheel chair maintained that "drinking the juice is only a small part of the cure. You have to take the lemon hulls and put them in a hot bath and then lie in the water for thirty minutes. That way the lemon oil works *into* the joints, and the juice you drank starts working *out*, and before you know it the arthritis has disappeared."

Personally, I'm confident that the large doses of thiamine hydrochloride, one of the vitamin B_1 compounds I'm taking now, will write the kayo to my ten-year bout with arthritis.

And if it shouldn't? Well, next spring you'll find me covered to my chin in a freshly plowed field!

THE END



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Pick of THE PICTURES

BY VIRGINIA SPIES

The Razor's Edge

AN earnest and elaborate movie has been shaped by producer Darryl Zanuck from the Somerset Maugham odyssey of young man's search for hi soul, in the company o some stylish sinners.

The Razor's Edge follows Tyrone Power, an intense idealist, through bizarrely contrasting worlds—Chicag in the '20s, Paris, and Indi —as he tries to forget beautiful but selfish Gene Tierney and find religion.

With Twentieth Century Fox lovingly lavishing its all in a strong Academy Awar bid, the film is distinguishe by fine acting, Edmun Goulding's directing, an brilliant slices of both hig and low life.

Left: Clifton Webb is delightful as Gene's expatriate uncle who dotes on his own snobbery and Sulka underwear.

Right: Ty, after rejecting Tierney and a plush life, takes to mining and gets a clue to spiritual happiness from a friend.

Perhaps the most memorable performance in the entire picture is versatile Anne Baxter's. With great sensitivity she portrays an average girl turned alcoholic.

Rounding out the multi-star cast are John Payne, playing Gene's humdrum husband, and Herbert Marshall as Maugham, observer of all the saintliness and sinning.

OTHER PICTURES WORTH SEEING

UNDERCURRENT (M-G-M). Here's a sleek and suspenseful picture which brings Katharine Hepburn and Robert Taylor back to the screen after long absences.

SONG OF THE SOUTH (Disney). A merry re-creation of the Uncle Remus stories with cute kids, catchy tunes, and ingenious additions to Disney's menagerie.

HUMORESQUE (Warner Bros.). A polished and provocative movie which features fine acting by Joan Crawford, John Garfield, and Oscar Levant.

MARGIE (20th Century-Fox). A sweet, refreshing comedy of young love set in the era of flappers, coonskin coats, and the Charleston.

THE STRANGE WOMAN (United Artists). Ben Ames Williams' popular novel has been adapted into a costume piece, starring Hedy Lamarr.

DECEPTION (Warner Bros.). Bette Davis and Claude Rains vie for acting honors in an engrossing backstage drama of musical artists.

THE DARK MIRROR (International). This is an absorbing supercharged thriller, Olivia De Havilland excelling at playing twins.

THE JOLSON STORY (Columbia). A schmaltzy, spirited and unforgettable tribute to one of our greatest entertainers, with Larry Parks playing Jolson.

BLUE SKIES (Paramount). A top-notch musical, with Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire, and Joan Caulfield doing justice to twenty-eight tunes by Irving Berlin.

PICTURE of the Month

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer presents

"TILL THE CLOUDS ROLL BY"

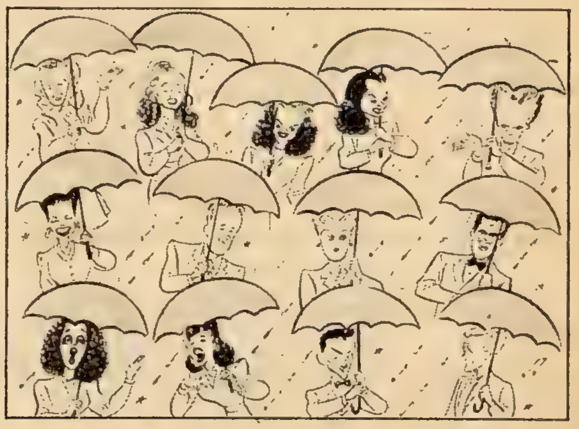
IN TECHNICOLOR

Starring (alphabetically)

JUNE ALLYSON **VAN JOHNSON**
LUCILLE BREMER **ANGELA LANSBURY**
JUDY GARLAND **TONY MARTIN**
KATHRYN GRAYSON **VIRGINIA O'BRIEN**
VAN HEFLIN **DINAH SHORE**
LENA HORNE **FRANK SINATRA**
ROBERT WALKER *(as Jerome Kern)*

Story by Guy Bolton • Adapted by George Wells
Screen Play by Myles Connolly and Jean Holloway
Based on the Life and Music of JEROME KERN

Directed by..............RICHARD WHORF
Produced by...............ARTHUR FREED



The fountain of melody that was turned on by the undying talent of Jerome Kern comes now to the screen in a lush geyser, illuminated by Technicolor, and entitled "Till The Clouds Roll By". Presented so beautifully, artistically, and personally, it places the accent where it belongs—on the story behind the songs.

Today we are singing and dancing to the Kern tunes of two generations. America is rich in its popular composers but along with Stephen Foster a special niche in the Hall of Lilting Fame is reserved for Jerry Kern.

M-G-M has done well by the theme of a self-made man on the Broadway scene, one who always remained young in heart. The cast is a "Who's Who" of acting and singing talent. Judy Garland plays Marilyn Miller, and Robert Walker gives a brilliant impersonation of Jerome Kern. June Allyson, as a musicomedy star, sings the title song, "Till The Clouds Roll By".

The celestial array continues with Lucille Bremer lyrically requesting "One More Dance", and Van Johnson replying "I Won't Dance" (but he does!); Kathryn Grayson singing "Long Ago And Far Away"; Lena Horne wondering "Why Was I Born?"; Tony Martin sighing for "All The Things You Are"; Dinah Shore singing "They Didn't Believe Me"; Frank Sinatra bringing the house down with "Ol' Man River"—and many, many more stars.

"Till The Clouds Roll By" is all pure sunshine, dazzling with talent and song.

BEAUTY AND THE BUTLER

Continued from Page 15

stained khaki trousers. "We don't have to insinuate with each other, my dear sister. By the way, whatever happened to your fourth husband?"

Althea became much exasperated. "Luigi? He ran off with that chorus girl. Of course she'd turn out to be the domestic type and she makes him very comfortable, damn him. Even sews on his buttons."

Mr. Sanderson looked lovingly at his tossing linden trees. "I think I liked the third one better—the young Englishman you picked up at Monte Carlo."

"Cannes," his sister told him. "He was sweet. I've always thought it was a shame we didn't suit each other." She abruptly changed her tactics and became soft and helpless and feminine. "Now, Joe darling, you know you don't need a butler as much as I do."

Mr. Sanderson started to enjoy himself. "He isn't anything of a butler as yet. Just a big clumsy Marblehead boy."

His sister happily began rearranging his life. "You could move down to the inn, dearest. You'd be much more comfortable."

"I will not move down to the inn," said Mr. Sanderson.

Althea arose sweepingly. "Oh yes, you will, brother dear. You'll have to when I get Frederick away from you. And I am certainly going to get him."

She went dashingly down the long wooden steps and mounted the black horse, which immediately stood on his hind legs. She struck him with her crop and they went away at a gallop.

Frederick's head appeared from beneath the veranda. "Gosh, sir!" it said.

"A very instructive conversation, Freddie. I hope you heard it all."

The rest of Frederick's nut-brown body emerged. "Most, I guess."

Mr. Sanderson's pale blue eyes began to twinkle. "And how would you like to work for my sister?"

"I'm scared of her," said Frederick simply.

AT four thirty in the afternoon Mr. Sanderson's estate really came to life. At four thirty Mr. Sanderson donned a gray plaid jacket, a brown linen waistcoat, a delicate blue-and-gray tie with a pearl stickpin, a pair of striped gray flannel trousers, socks as delicately tinted as his tie, and beautiful white buckskin shoes. He then put on his newest Panama hat, took his ebony stick, and seated himself at a white iron table in the inner garden.

"Freddie!" he called into thin air.

Frederick immediately materialized in a black double-breasted coat, white shirt, black bow tie, white waistcoat, and striped trousers. He was bearing a lacquered tray.

Ed Nofziger

"My problem is, I get airsick if I fly, seasick if I swim, and shot if I land!"
LIBERTY

"Your tea, sir."

Mr. Sanderson inspected his third best china service, which had been in the family for forty years. He sniffed at his tea.

"Toast, sir."

The toast was cut in strips with a little marmalade on it.

"Delightful, Freddie. Is there some cake?"

Frederick whisked off a cover. "Not very good, sir, I'm afraid."

"Not at all good," said Mr. Sanderson. "Nevertheless, I shall have some."

He ate and Freddie hovered while envious persons passed by and mentally damned Mr. Sanderson for a bloated capitalist.

Mr. Sanderson enjoyed that because he wasn't one. Had those same persons seen him in the morning, they would have thought he was a broken-down gardener, and Mr. Sanderson would have enjoyed that too.

Mr. Sanderson, who had retired from business when he was fifty, had always made a practice of getting as much amusement out of life as he could, and he intended to continue doing so.

It was great fun, for instance, to let Frederick run wild in his shorts all day and then snap him into the semblance of a butler at four thirty sharp. It was also good for him.

Mr. Sanderson waved his hand.

"My cocktail, Freddie."

He pushed back his hat and surveyed his house. It was an oddly ugly Victorian summer cottage, once painted green, now gone black with the salt wind and fog. A porch ran around three quarters of it, with lattices cunningly placed to ward off too intense sun. Looking at it, no one would have conceived how comfortable it was inside.

No one would have imagined either that its upper reaches once housed a staff of four servants. Mr. Sanderson looked back on that lost splendor and thought of dinner parties for twelve with the dark table banked with roses.

That sounded magnificent, but it hadn't been, Mr. Sanderson knew. Nothing in East Harbor was actually magnificent, though its summer residents were given to thinking so. They also considered themselves brilliant and far superior to the inhabitants of Bar Harbor and Newport. The natives thought that the summer residents were stuck-up fools, except for Mr. Sanderson.

Frederick appeared with a small tray, a silver shaker, and a glass. "Your cocktail, sir."

Frederick was really remarkable when he was properly dressed. Mr. Sanderson realized that sooner or later some of his neighbors would succeed in luring him away, unless he could be securely anchored. Mr. Sanderson proposed to anchor him.

"Freddie, how's that chicken we're supposed to have for dinner?"

Frederick's forehead wrinkled. "It's still a little blue, sir."

Mr. Sanderson shuddered. In time Frederick might be made into the semblance of a suave butler; it was utterly impossible that he would ever become a cook.

THAT next day was warm and drowsy, so Mr. Sanderson gleefully took off his shirt and began to war on the weeds. Several tourists who saw him were sure he must be an inmate of the county poorhouse.

He paused momentarily as Frederick came galloping by. "Got to go down to Mrs. McLane's, sir."

Alarm bells started ringing in Mr. Sanderson's brain. "But you just took the laundry over yesterday."

"Forgot to tell her something about it, sir," said Frederick.

That, Mr. Sanderson knew, was a transparent lie. "Ah, yes. And this is your afternoon off, isn't it?"

Watching him go loping down the road, Mr. Sanderson decided it was high time he had a good look at Mrs. McLane. He could then determine just how dangerous she was.

So he ascended to his bedroom and dressed himself with great care in smokecolored tweeds. He chose a stout ash stick and then stepped through his garden onto the sidewalk.

A red motorcar with tan trimmings was coming along at a slow crawl and at its wheel was his cousin, Marjorie Wood.

Marjorie, a long, lean, lanky girl with a high tan, numerous freckles, and a rather regrettable snub nose, had only recently been discharged from the WAC. Some unknown circumstance had suddenly instilled in her a passion for being democratic.

She had only the other day waylaid the iceman and insisted on his telling her his troubles. The iceman, who did not wish to be democratic with anyone, had sworn he'd quit his route if she weren't stopped.

"Good afternoon, Marjorie," said Mr. Sanderson. "And why are you lurking about?"

Marjorie's voice was so astoundingly deep that it made Mr. Sanderson jump. "I'm just admiring your garden, Cousin Joe."

"Admire ahead. And how do you like being out of the army?"

Marjorie tossed her dark bush of hair. "I don't. Everything's so dull. I wish I were a sergeant again."

Mr. Sanderson thought that the privates in his cousin's company must have led miserable lives. He was also sure that Marjorie was up to something, but his mind was now on Mrs. McLane.

HE cut across the corner by the church and came to her small neat white house with its white picket fence and an old dory filled with flowers in its front yard.

Since there didn't seem to be any bell, Mr. Sanderson rattled the screen door.

A soft voice said "Come in."

He went through a dim hall into a light shiny kitchen, and a small blonde woman was bending over to put something in the oven.

Mr. Sanderson noticed her hair first because it was so shining gold and bound around her head in thick braids. Then he transferred his attention to the rest of her and found she was wearing a boy's shirt and blue dungarees rolled up to the knees. Even so, Mr. Sanderson decided, she appeared to be a sort of vest-pocket Venus.

She turned around and dusted her hands as a delicious smell came from the oven. "Oh, I thought it was Mr. Small!"

A nice sweet voice and one very pleasant to hear about the house, Mr. Sanderson thought. Nice blue eyes, too, with dark brows above them and a firm sensible mouth.

"Ah, yes," he told her. "Quite natural. As a matter of fact, Frederick Small works for me."

Mrs. McLane plumped herself down in a kitchen chair and her cheeks were the color of a wild rose. "I've often seen you in your garden, Mr. Sanderson, and now, of course, you would catch me when I'm baking a chicken pie."

Mr. Sanderson sat down too, and his mouth watered as he thought of the oven-bound pie and then of the cold sausage Frederick had undoubtedly left him for his dinner.

"A very good moment to catch you, my dear. I thought it was high time we met each other."

Deep dimples appeared at each corner of Mrs. McLane's mouth, indicating that she understood perfectly.

Mr. Sanderson was beginning to get quite hungry. "I take a great interest in Frederick, apart from his being my butler."

Mrs. McLane's dimples deepened. "He's very handsome, but I shouldn't think he'd be much of a butler."

Mr. Sanderson's thoughts continued to concentrate on the chicken pie, bubbling away there in the oven. "He isn't yet, though he's very willing. He's hardly the brilliant type."

Mrs. McLane hooked her heels into the chair rungs like a little girl. "I'm glad he isn't. My late husband, Mr. McLane, was very brainy. He often said so. He was so bright at thinking up ways of getting money without working that we were always broke. I'm beginning to think that the less brains a husband has, the better."

She got up and opened the oven door, and though she was very graceful in the dungarees, they still didn't suit her a bit.

"I don't believe Freddie Small can cook, either," she said. "You must be about starved, Mr. Sanderson."

Mr. Sanderson could now see the chicken pie plainly.

"I am."

"Then you'd better stay to dinner."

Mr. Sanderson laid his cane on the floor. "I most certainly shall."

An hour later he was in a delightful state of content. Outside the window the sun was setting across the bay in crimson and mauve.

He could still taste the chicken pie and there lay before him the remains of a steamed cherry dumpling. But when he surveyed the lovely Mrs. McLane, he was unsatisfied.

"Would you mind, my dear, if I became very personal?"

"About what?" said Mrs. McLane with some caution.

"Your clothes. You don't do justice to yourself. What you need to set you off are some smart summer dresses—in pastel shades, I should say."

Mrs. McLane's chin went very stubborn. "I like pants."

Mr. Sanderson approved of her having a mind of her own. "Well, you should have some prettier ones, then."

Mrs. McLane put her hands firmly on her knees. "How?"

Mr. Sanderson took out his pocketbook.

"GOOD morning, sir. Your breakfast."

Mr. Sanderson sat up in bed and perceived that it must be chilly, for Frederick had mounted a Basque shirt over his shorts.

He set down a tray and Mr. Sanderson shuddered. The bacon was greasy, the toast was burned, and Mr. Sanderson knew that the coffee was vile even before he tasted it.

"Good morning, Frederick. Did you have a delightful time on your evening off?"

Frederick looked acutely uncomfortable. "No, sir. I didn't. Miss Marjorie Wood insisted on picking me up in her motorcar."

He might have known his cousin was lurking about for no good purpose, Mr. Sanderson thought.

"Did she indeed? A most strenuous young woman, Marjorie."

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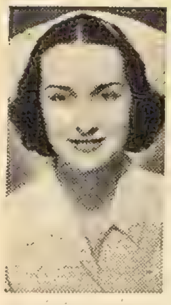

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"Yes, sir. She took me over to the Casino."

Mr. Sanderson sustained a slight shock. He had no doubt that Marjorie's father had commissioned her to decoy Frederick away and offer him bribes, but he didn't believe Mr. Wood's plans had included his daughter's arrival at the Casino accompanied by a butler.

"There were a lot of those debutantes over there," Frederick disclosed. "Those girls who always get their names in the paper."

Mr. Sanderson said he was familiar with the species. "And how did you like them, Freddie?"

"I didn't. When they weren't talking as if their mouths were full of oatmeal, they were squealing."

"And the Casino itself. Did that amuse you?"

"I shouldn't have been there," said Frederick. "It wasn't suitable."

That was a sound sentiment, Mr. Sanderson thought.

But Frederick had further news. "That Miss Wood, sir, she said her family'd give me twelve dollars a week more than you're paying."

Mr. Sanderson was not at all surprised. "And are you going to work for the Woods, Freddie?"

"I am not. Miss Marjorie reminds me of a top sergeant, and I hate top sergeants."

That was entirely satisfactory, Mr. Sanderson thought. But just then he had something else on his mind.

"I dropped in on that Mrs. McLane for a moment yesterday, Freddie. A very dangerous woman."

Frederick's eyes went wide with surprise. "Oh, no, sir. She's just sort of sloppy."

"Very, very dangerous," insisted Mr. Sanderson. "I shouldn't be a bit surprised if she wanted to get married again. She'll make a good match, too. Mark my words."

Frederick's mouth fell open and Mr. Sanderson addressed himself to his miserable breakfast. Unless help came soon, he would certainly starve to death.

Nevertheless he worked manfully in his garden all morning, and at two in the afternoon, when Frederick was somnolently playing the hose, he was greatly gratified to behold a small golden-headed figure parading slowly down the walk.

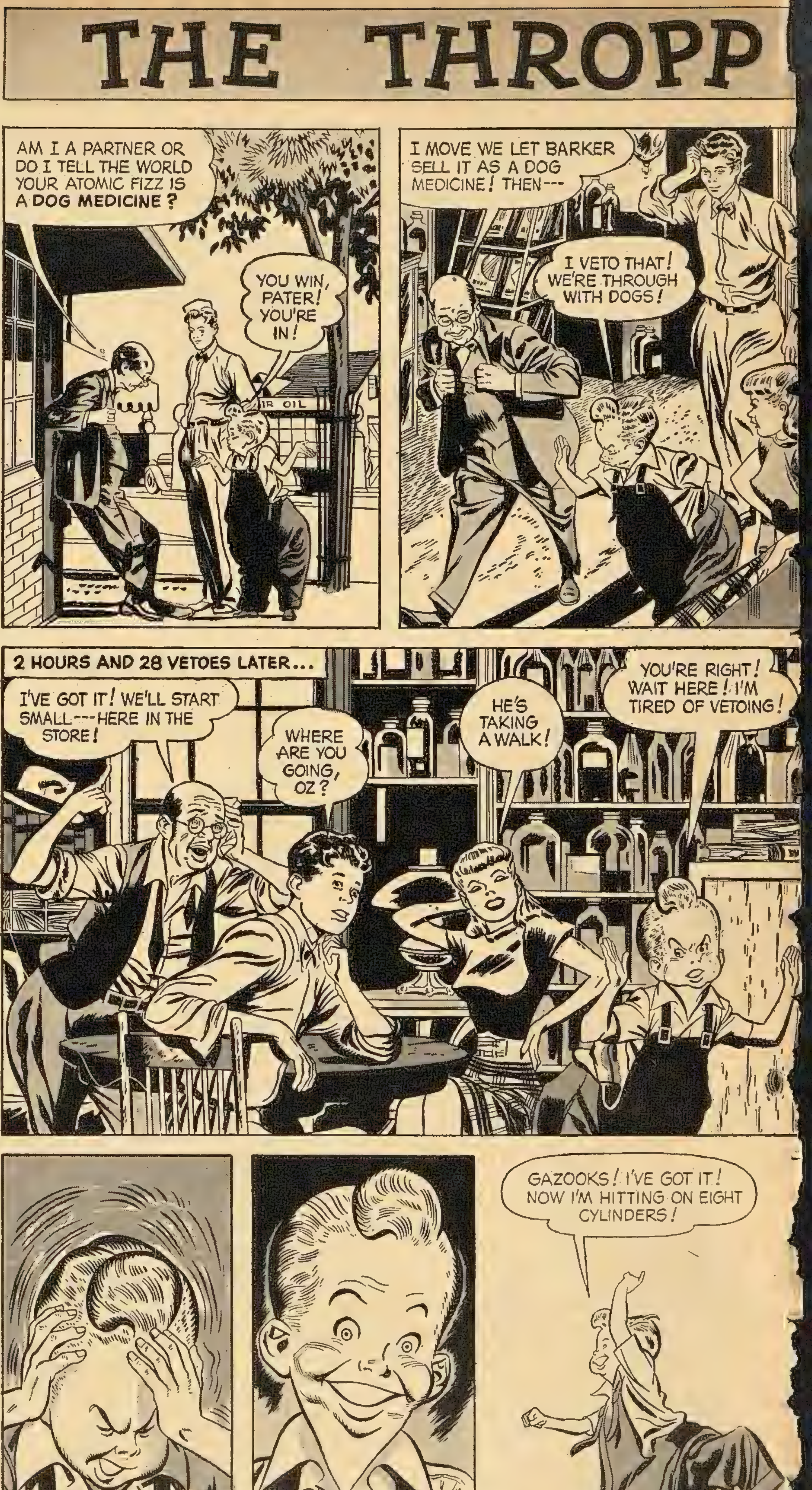
MRS. McLANE may have looked sloppy yesterday, but she didn't today. Her hair shone in the sun, her blue eyes sparkled, her mouth had been arranged in a Cupid's bow. Her rose-colored jacket and slacks suited her beautifully.

Mr. Sanderson gazed upon his handiwork and found it good. He even, for a fleeting moment, had the mild wish that he were twenty years younger himself.

A series of disconnected gurgles came from Frederick, who seemed about to strangle himself with the hose.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Sanderson.

(*Continued on page 68*)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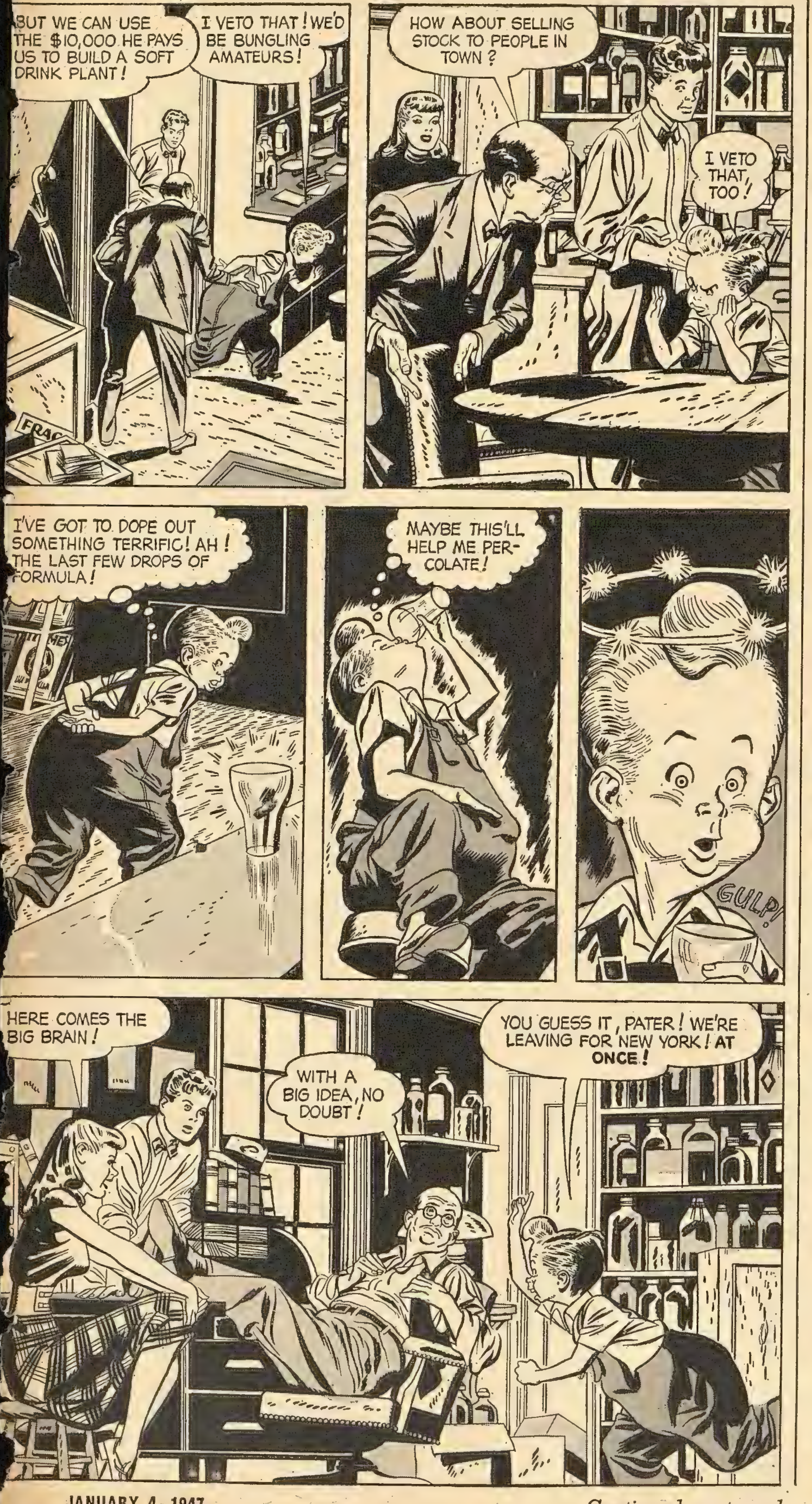
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, OZ?
HE'S TAKING A WALK!
YOU'RE RIGHT! WAIT HERE! I'M TIRED OF VETOING!
SNAP!
GAZOOKS! I'VE GOT IT! NOW I'M HITTING ON EIGHT CYLINDERS!

FAMILY

Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DONLOU**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FRAG
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I VETO THAT, TOO!
I'VE GOT TO DOPE OUT SOMETHING TERRIFIC! AH! THE LAST FEW DROPS OF FORMULA!
MAYBE THIS'LL HELP ME PERCOLATE!
GULP!
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WITH A BIG IDEA, NO DOUBT!
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Continued next week

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SECURITY

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(*Continued from page 66*)

Good afternoon, Mr. Small," called Mrs. McLane and walked in beauty down to the beach.

Frederick went into a state of semiparalysis which ended only when the delicious Mrs. McLane put in another appearance an hour later. This time she had conquered her prejudices so far as to don a white frilly blouse and a blue-and-white dirndl, both of which were just as becoming as Mr. Sanderson had thought they would be.

Frederick promptly dropped what he was doing. "I got to go down to the store for something."

Mr. Sanderson watched him depart, and then decided he had business at the post office.

As he came down the wide road, he could plainly see his sister with one foot on the running board of her station wagon. She was talking to Frederick, who showed every sign of wishing to get away as soon as possible.

Althea was all in white, with a broad green belt about her waist and a green ribbon around her tawny hair. She was a striking figure, but by no means a match for the delightful Mrs. McLane.

Frederick suddenly disconnected himself and departed on a run.

Mr. Sanderson, arriving on the scene, raised his ancient hat. "A beautiful day, Althea."

"So you say," she snapped.

Mr. Sanderson deduced that she had had no luck with Frederick.

IT was just ten days later when Frederick suddenly vanished into thin air. Mr. Sanderson had stepped into the house for something. When he came out, his butler was gone.

Mr. Sanderson concluded that Frederick had been seized with a desire to bathe, and continued his task of rooting dandelions out of the lawn. The town clock struck three and Frederick was undoubtedly splashing about in icy sea water. It struck four and Mr. Sanderson wandered to the cliff edge and stared at the stony beach. There were a fine collection of nursemaids and children but no six-foot figure in saffron shorts.

"Freddie!" shouted Mr. Sanderson.

In a very bad temper, he concocted his own tea and moodily consumed it in his front parlor.

Five o'clock. Six. Seven.

Mr. Sanderson had a little cold sausage and became convinced that the plots of his relatives or neighbors had at last borne fruit. Someone had stolen Frederick away.

He went upstairs and donned his white dinner jacket. Then he went forth on a tour of inspection.

As he walked through the soft summer twilight, he decided that existence without Frederick's services would be impossible. He would have to move to the inn, and he hated it.

His first call was upon his sister. He found Althea sitting on her porch in a black lace dress, smoking a cigarette in a long amber holder and apparently in a smoldering state of mind.

Her green eyes flashed angrily as he advanced. "You might as well make up your mind," she said, "that I'm going to get Frederick away from you sooner or later, brother dear. I'll simply raise my bid till he can't afford to refuse."

Mr. Sanderson felt much relieved, for she certainly hadn't succeeded in snatching his butler yet. "Freddie is the sole prop of my old age," he told her.

His sister snorted. "Well, Joe, you can grow old if you want to, but I certainly shan't. I flatly refuse to."

Mr. Sanderson admired her spirit. In fact, if she hadn't had designs on Frederick, he would have admired Althea wholeheartedly. At eighty, she'd probably be taking a world tour.

He raised his hat. "My dear sister, you will undoubtedly attain eternal youth, and I hope you do. Incidentally, you look very dashing."

"You needn't try to soft-soap me," said Althea suspiciously as he went down the steps. "I don't know what you're up to, but it's something discreditable."

Mr. Sanderson only wished it were and wandered past the lilac hedge to the Woods.

MARJORIE was perched on the veranda rail in a blue shirt and gray slacks, and a pin point of light testified that her father was in the act of smoking a cigar.

If Frederick were about the property, he was carefully concealed.

"Hi there, Cousin Joe. Come on up," commanded Marjorie in her best parade-ground voice.

Mr. Sanderson did and sat down beside Mr. Wood, a small, plump, fussy little man inclined to be on the pompous side.

"You know, Joe," said Mr. Wood immediately, "you're doing a great job on that garden of yours. That's the real old American spirit. If you want a job done right, don't be afraid to do it yourself."

Mr. Sanderson nodded, knowing that Mr. Wood wouldn't condescend to do a thing in his own garden, even if it were choked with weeds. If Mr. Wood wanted a job done right, he'd hire someone else to see to it. Besides, he probably had Frederick locked in a closet.

Mr. Wood waved his cigar. "I certainly envy you that butler fella of yours. Where is he, by the way? Haven't seen him around today."

Mr. Sanderson decided that Mr. Wood didn't have Frederick in his possession. "Oh, Freddie's becoming quite the man about town. He was over at the Casino the other night."

A stifled sound came from Marjorie.

Mr. Wood became much enraged. "What right's he got going to the Casino? That fella's getting above himself. All those fellas are getting above themselves. No wonder the country's going to hell."

Mr. Sanderson was much amused. "Nonsense," said he. "Freddie comes from a very fine Marblehead family. A better family than ours. Much, much better."

He scuttled down the steps, conscious that Marjorie's glance was stabbing him between the shoulder blades, and delighted that, all in all, he had succeeded in upsetting the Wood family a good deal.

He turned his steps toward Mrs. McLane's small house. It was dark and locked and entirely untenanted.

"Ah!" said Mr. Sanderson and went happily home to bed.

"GOOD morning, sir. Your breakfast!"

Mr. Sanderson blinked and sat up. Frederick was not in his shorts: he had on his black coat and striped trousers and, aside from a frightened manner, seemed quite undamaged.

"Good morning, Freddie."

The breakfast tray was on Mr. Sanderson's knees and its contents had changed greatly. The bacon was beautiful and crisp, there were some steaming blueberry muffins.

"Splendid!" said Mr. Sanderson.

Frederick's ears wiggled: his feet shuffled. His eyes stared at some invisible point on the ceiling. "Sir," he said desperately, "I got married."

Mr. Sanderson began enjoying his muffin. "Did you indeed? And who's the lucky lady?"

"Lena, sir. That is, Mrs. McLane."

Mr. Sanderson ate his bacon.

Frederick transferred his troubled gaze to the Atlantic Ocean outside the window. "The fact is, sir, that Lena—that is Mrs. McLane—only she's Mrs. Small now—is downstairs right this minute."

Mr. Sanderson could have told that from the splendid breakfast he was having.

"I hope you won't be mad about it, sir."

Mr. Sanderson sampled the coffee and it was wonderful. "Certainly not, Freddie. My congratulations."

Frederick attained a final pitch of desperation. "Look here, sir. There are plenty of empty rooms upstairs and—Lena's moved some of her things in already, though I told her she shouldn't." Frederick shuddered and summoned his last resources. "She's—she's a splendid cook, sir."

Mr. Sanderson was fully aware of it. If Mrs. McLane hadn't been a culinary expert, she wouldn't now be married to Frederick. But Frederick would never know that.

He beamed upon his butler. "A very ingenious idea, Freddie. By all means, tell your wife to move all her things over at once. And get the east bedroom ready. It's by far the best one. We shall all be very happy together, I'm sure."

A great sense of well-being filled Mr. Sanderson as he took another muffin. Everything in life had a way of working out all right, he thought, provided you gave Fate a slight push at the proper time.

THE END

ANSWERS TO WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT 1946?

On Page 22

1. Rose: Alabama 34, Southern California 14. Sugar: Oklahoma A. & M. 33, St. Mary's 13. Orange: Miami 13, Holy Cross 6.

2. The moon.

3. Italy's Umberto II. Ananda of Siam. George of Greece. Leopold of Belgium.

4. Andrew Jackson May of Kentucky, and late of Congress.

5. Joe Louis of Conn before their fight. Tami Mauriello after his brief waltz with Louis.

6. (*a*) Ted Williams of the Boston Red Sox. (*b*) Blanchard and Davis of Army. (*c*) The Louis-Conn fight, ringside at $100 per seat. (*d*) First Negro to play for Yale football team. (*e*) Rocky Graziano and Tony Zale, fought No. 1 Fight of Year. (*f*) Won U. S. Tennis Singles Championship at Forest Hills. (*g*) Won Kentucky Derby, Preakness, and Belmont too.

7. The Egg and I; The Snake Pit.

8. Those of the Brothers Pasquel, Mexico's Larry MacPhails, stealing American ballplayers for the Mexican League.

9. G. Bernard Shaw. (You should live so long!)

10. (*a*) After receiving $115,000 for false imprisonment when Thomas E. Dewey was D. A., Campbell died soon after. (*b*) Roxas became first Prexy of new Philippine Republic. (*c*) Convicted for theft of Hesse crown jewels from Germany (Naziland). (*d*) Famous huckster; died in September. (*e*) Chairman, Republican National Committee; did some crowing in November.

11. Afghanistan, Iceland, Sweden. No, not Spain!

12. The Aga Khan. Don't worry; he's still got plenty!

13. (*a*) Republican campaign slogan. (*b*) Goofy refrain in the screwy song, Cement Mixer. (*c*) Gag comment on Russian Zone policy.

14. (*a*) Von Ribbentrop. (*b*) Hermann Göring. (*c*) Schact, Von Papen, Fritzsche—but *why?* (*d*) Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio.

15. (*a*) Bob Feller. (*b*) Brooklyn's and the Red Sox', who should of stayed in bed! (*c*) Gromyko.

16. Miguel Alemán.

17. (*a*) A name which never would be missed! (*b*) Claghorn, otherwise Kenny Delmar. (*c*) La Follette. He was outswept!

18. (*a*) Ray Milland in Lost Weekend. (*b*) Joan Crawford, for Mildred Pierce. (*c*) Jane (. .) Russell.

19. (*a*) The New York truck strike. (*b*) Pittsburgh Pirates. (*c*) TWA pilots.

20. (*a*) First wired bra hit market. (Uplifting question, eh?) (*b*) Those handkerchief bathing suits! Zowie!

21. Winsor married Artie Shaw; Truman divorced Wallace; Argentina and Braden phfft!; Bennett m. Her Fifth; De Havilland m. Goodrich; MacPhail d. Dickey; the U.A.W. m. Reuther; Hayworth made up with Welles; Clark d. Rogge; Britain d. India; Gravel Gertie m. B. O. Plenty.

22. Frank (E-e-k!) Sinatra.

23. O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh. Annie Get Your Gun, all about Annie Oakley. Call Me Mister. State of the Union.

24. Joseph W. Stilwell. Harlan Stone of the Supreme Court.

25. Billy Rose started Pitching Horseshoes; Sidney (The Mouse) Skolsky made The Jolson Story. (Hellinger did The Killers, too!)

26. Canada Lee in the short-lived revival of The Duchess of Malfi.

27. The Nickel—William Arthur variety.

28. The Horse Show—bless its odorous sanctity!

29. That Truman resign!

30. (*a*) Automatic device that dynamites pilot from damaged plane. (*b*) New space ship army promises to start building in eighteen months for moon tours. (*c*) New army poison that outhorrors the A bomb. And a Happy New Year to you, too!

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JAN. 4, 1947

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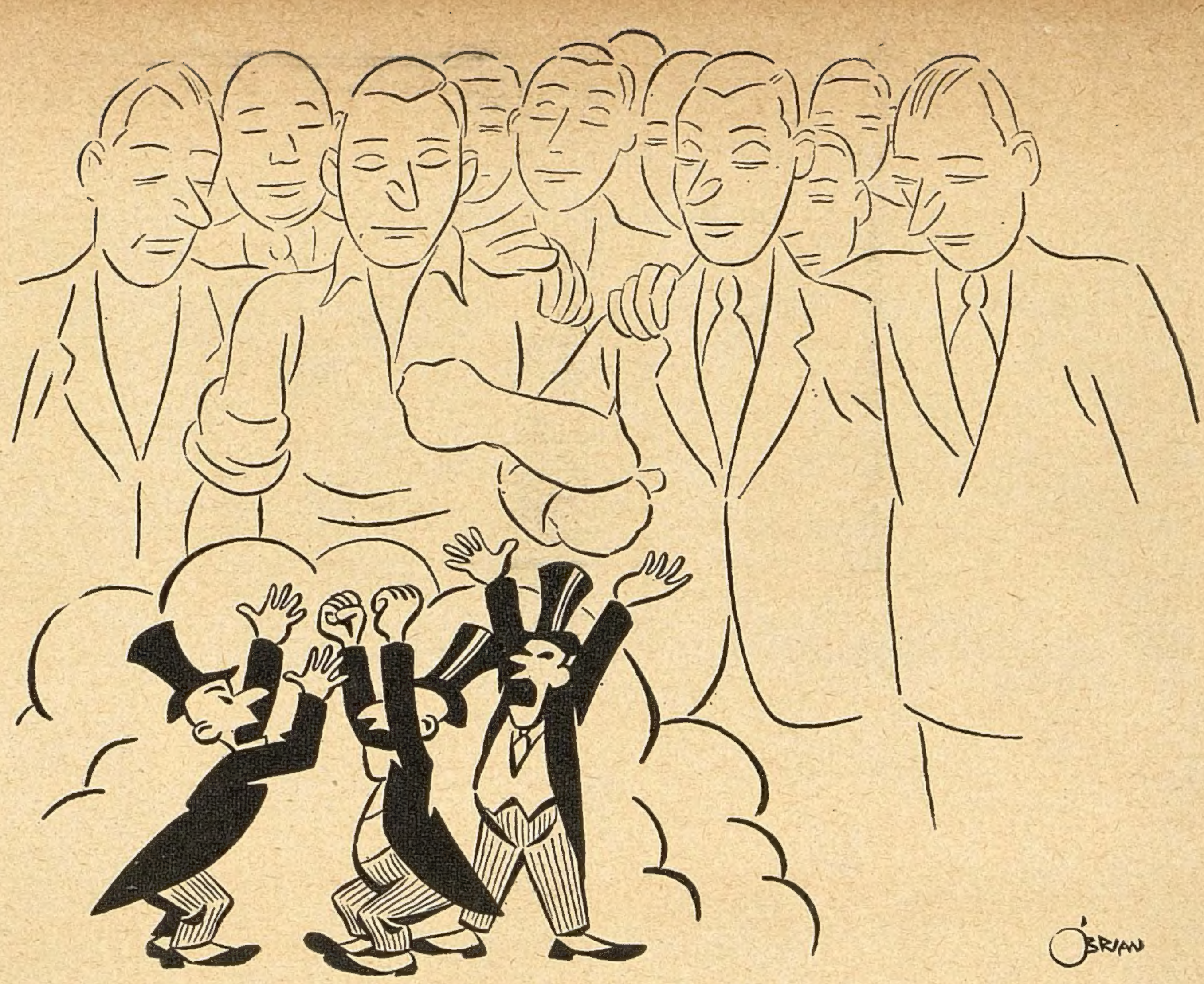


United peoples—divided politicians.

PEACE ON EARTH—TO MEN OF GOOD WILL

AT this season, almost by some inward compulsion, many of the nations of the earth and the individuals thereof pause for a day or a week in their ordinary pursuits to give play for a time to their better natures. During this short period strife and antagonism are in abeyance. The strivings of people, one with another, are put aside. The most poignant wish of all mankind comes to the fore and everywhere is heard the greeting, "Peace on earth to men of good will."

The yearning for peace is great among all the peoples of the world and likewise good will toward each other. And yet, the representatives of the peoples, meeting in conclave at Flushing and Lake Success, New York, ignore this truth. In their dealings with one another they forget that peace is possible on earth only to men of good will. Without good will it can never be attained.

Despite the bitter cost of the recent war, each diplomat strives in every situation to reap an advantage for his nation, or at the very least to avoid a disadvantage. There is little inclination to work out solutions on the basis of justice, right, or for the greater good of the greater number. Endless debate over minor matters holds up progress in every committee and subcommittee of the United Nations. Affairs are settled by shrewd political horse-trading and not in a spirit of fair play and good will.

Peace on earth will never come until men of good will sit down to make it. Can the advantage to be gained by a strip of territory in eastern Europe outweigh the good will which is lost by grabbing it? Does the value of an air base on other people's territory offset the resentment, mistrust, and fear which its retention creates? Is the feeling of "sovereignty" under which each nation is a law unto itself of greater benefit than would be the adoption of a code of international law to encompass all states, large and small alike?

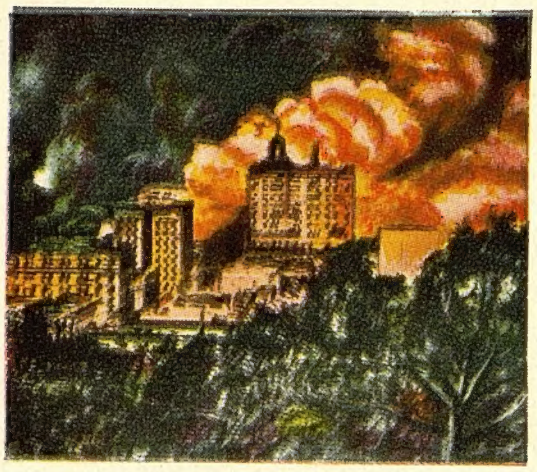
At this season of the year, more than at other times, it is evident the diplomats are failing us as they have so many times before. There are no quarrels among the peoples of the world. There are only quarrels among their representatives. These gentlemen, in their determination to be "shrewd" and to guard their countries against every conceivable eventuality, create discord and inhibit the good will which alone can bring peace.

The spirit of the Christmas season, if it is applied to world affairs, can bring to all mankind the greatest blessing ever—the gift of peace.

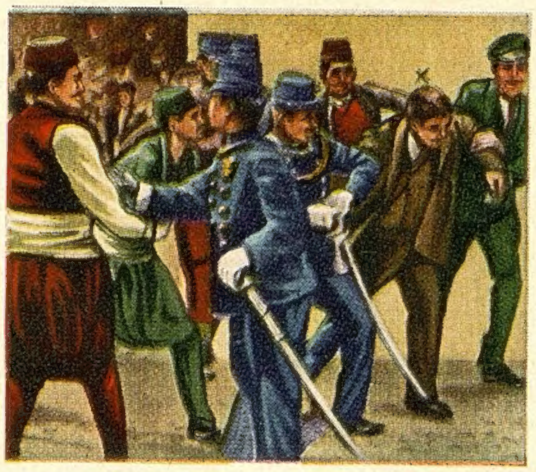
Paul Hunter

Liberty
...THE PRESERVATION OF FREEDOM IS THIS MAGAZINE'S PURPOSE

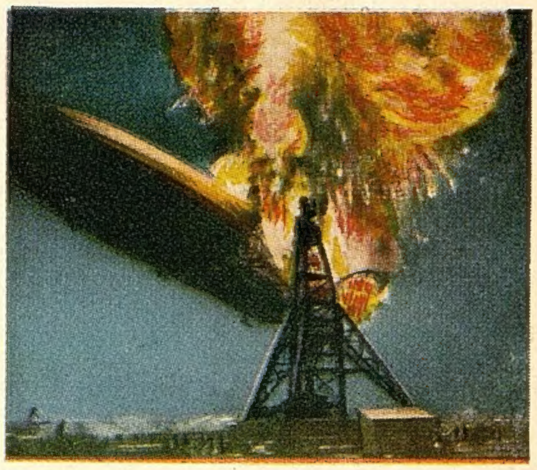
What's your favorite news photo?



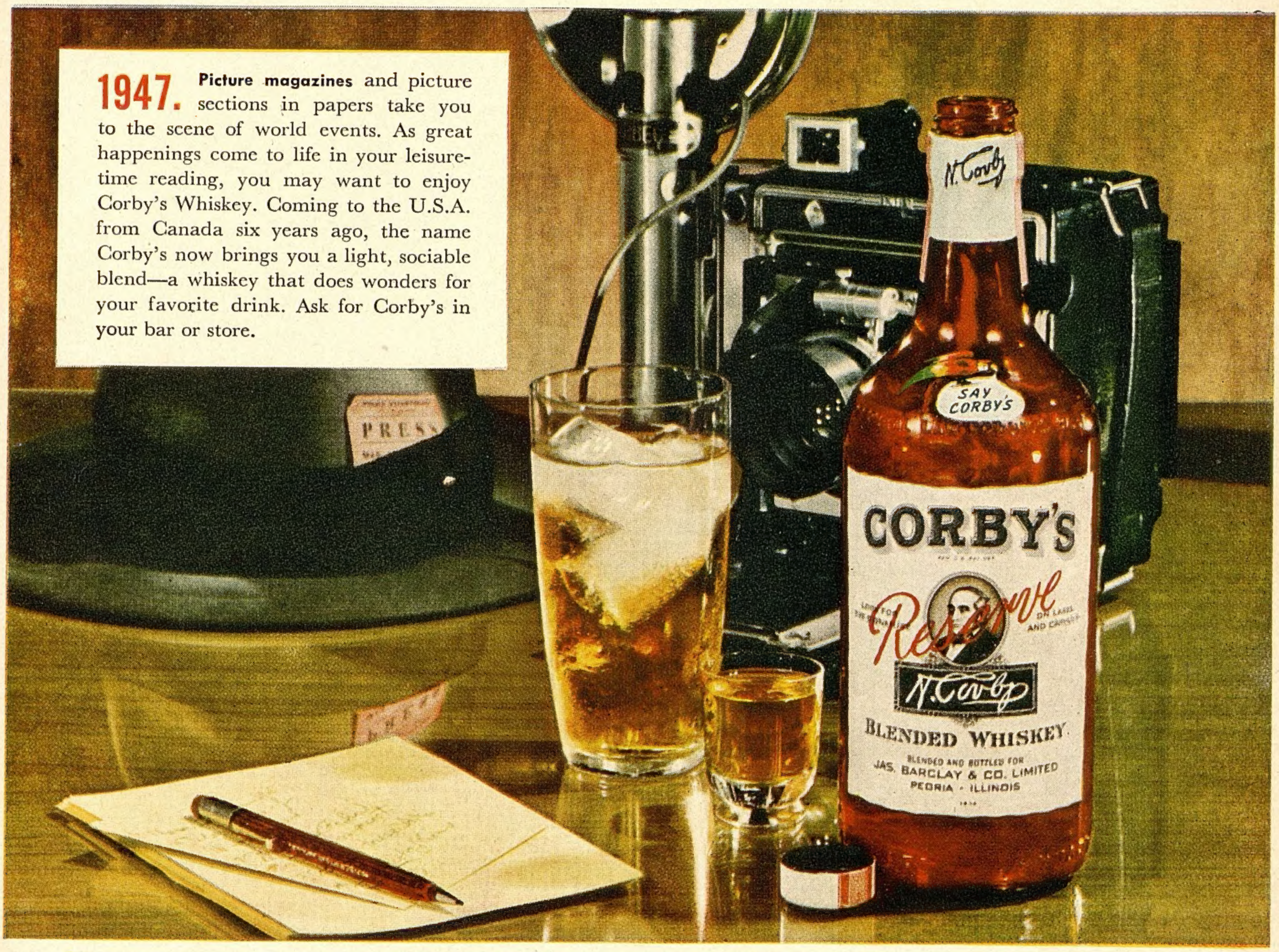
1906. **News photos** have a way of sticking in the mind's eye. You may remember the rare photo above (shown with color added, as are others on this page) taken during San Francisco's earthquake, which occurred in Corby's 48th year of Canadian fame.



1914. **This picture** shows the arrest of Gavro Princep who had just shot and killed the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his wife. This act precipitated World War I in Corby's 56th year as a respected Canadian name.



1937. **An all-time** great photo—explosion of the Zeppelin Hindenburg at Lakehurst, as the giant ship nosed to its mooring after a trans-Atlantic voyage. Cameras were faster, pictures better, as the name Corby's reached its 79th year of Canadian renown.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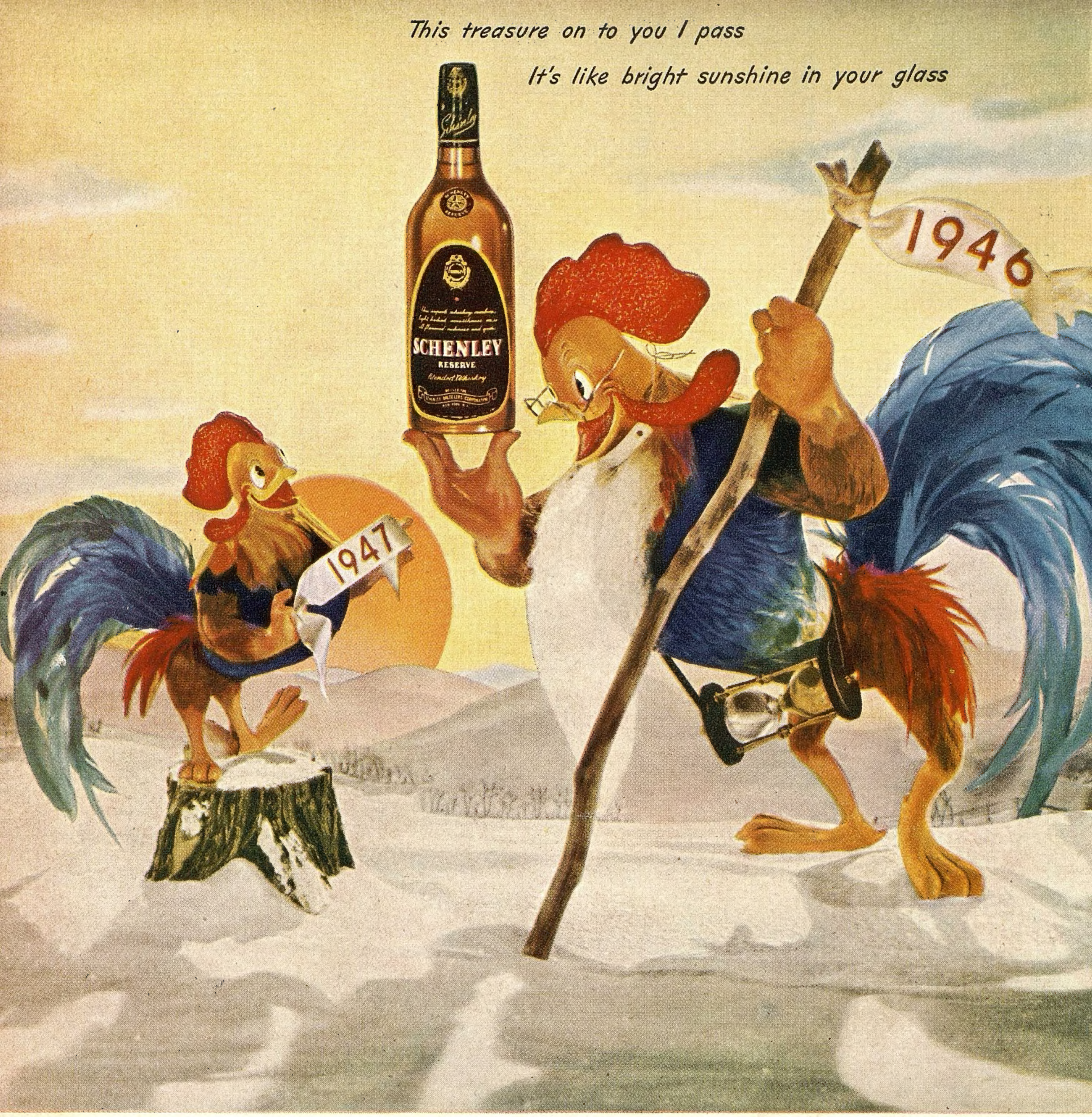
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